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ILLUSTRATIONS—SERMONS

HOMILETICS—METHODS OF CHURCH WORK

CHURCH MANAGEMENT

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(See the Review on page 184 of this issue.)

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The Journal of Parish Methods

The Ivory Plaque

DR. F. W. BOREHAM

TT is a far cry from the cloistral stillness of that ivy-covered medieval monastery to the bustling activity of this lonely sheep-station tucked away among the great Australian ranges; yet the ivory plaque has made the transition very successfully, and, on the whole, very fittingly. If the good old monk who, early in the sixteenth century, designed it with infinite artistry, and carved it with exquisite craftsmanship, could have foreseen the ultimate destiny of his dainty handiwork, he would, I fancy, have smiled a smile of gratification, perhaps even of benediction.

For Glenraven is, as far as I know, the only outback sheep-station in Australia that has added to all its other equipment a chapel, a sanctuary, a holy of holies. Although part of the main building, it is so arranged that none of the noise and commotion of the house or of the yard can be heard within its sacred walls. It has two tastefully-designed storied windows, worked in rich, yet subdued colourings, whilst its furnishings -Communion-table, pulpit, readingdesk and seats - are all of carved Australian oak. Everything is in perfect keeping with everything else, and an atmosphere of reverence and restfulness perpetually pervades the hallowed place. On the occasions of my visits, the seats were crowded with drovers and stockmen, shepherds and trappers, roughriders and

shearers. handv-men and abouts, station-boys and boundaryriders, as well, of course, as by members of the household, together with the cook, the blacksmith, and two or three swagmen who chanced to be on the premises at the moment. But, excellent as was the communal service that the chapel rendered under such conditions, it was not primarily for public worship that it was erected. It is strictly a sanctuary — a place of withdrawal. It can be entered from the outside as well as from the house; anybody on the station is at liberty to retire thither; and it is understood that, whenever two people meet within its walls, absolute silence shall be preserved. By general consent, conversation is prohibited.

"I cannot tell you what a comfort it has been to me," Mrs. Nairn confided to me one day. "However worried I may be when I enter, I invariably feel, when I leave, that I have lost my burden. Our little chapel gives us all wonderful supplies of refreshment and

comfort and strength!"

Mr. Nairn's testimony was very similar; and it was he who drew my attention to the ivory plaque. Yellow with age, it was let into the front of the Communion-table. On closer scrutiny, it proved to be a particularly handsome and very beautiful piece of monastic workmanship. It represents the familiar scene at the Manger—the shepherds, the cattle in

the background, and, in the center, the Virgin Mother and the Holy Child. And, underneath, perfectly carved, are the four Greek words Ho Logos Sarx Egeneto, which, in our version, are translated: And the Word was made flesh.

"You see," explained my host, as, after stooping to admire the plaque in detail, I rose and expressed to him my admiration and surprise, "you see, Grandfather Nairn came out to Australia from the old Manor House at Castleforbes. He came here in the early days and brought with him, to remind him of his English home, one or two of the treasures of the old place. This was among them. Originally, it formed part of the decorative scheme in the choir of an ancient Franciscan monastery, and was believed to have been the workmanship of a devout old monk who learned his art from Benvenuto Cellini. But, for some service rendered to the Abbott by the Lord of the Manor, it was transferred from the convent to the Manor House, a modern replica being substituted for it in its original place in the monastery. When my wife and I decided to build our little chapel here, we felt that this would be the very place for it. So here it is!"

It is many years since I saw the ivory plaque at Glenraven; but the memory of it sweeps back upon my mind today for three reasons. The first is that it is Christmas time; the second is that, among my greetings, is a card from Mr. and Mrs. Nairn; and the third is that I am expected to address a service on Christmas morning. In these circumstances, what theme could be more fitting than the theme depicted on the ivory plaque?

The Word was made Flesh! The phrase points to the supreme problem

of Deity. For God had something really wonderful to say - wonderful even for Him - and had to select a suitable vehicle for its utterance. We are all familiar with that perplexity. There come moments in life — pivotal moments, critical moments, moments on which destiny seems tremblingly to hang - in which the very surge of emotion, paralyzing all our powers, leaves us dumb. At such tense moments a man's whole soul is in his mouth; he feels that he must express himself or die; yet, confronted by such stupendous issues, his lips refuse their office and his tongue finds speech impossible. When the soul most aches for self-expression, one's speech becomes strangely broken and incoherent. In the crises of life we express ourselves, not in stately diction and exquisitely balanced sentences, but in the awkwardness of the limbs, in the confusion of the face and with a stammering tongue. At such times the eyes become invested with an eloquence peculiarly their own; the twitching of the lips becomes significant; blushes and pallor and tears become integral parts of life's cryptic code of communication. It is when the heart is overflowing that the fountain of language most perversely fails.

We poor preachers of the everlasting gospel are specially familiar with this phenomenon. We have a message burning like a fire in our bones — a message concerning God and sin and the Cross and eternity! But how to express it? There lies the problem! How to get a pound's worth of thought into a penny worth of language! Finding ourselves so circumstanced, it infinitely comforts us to reflect that, in the crisis of the

(Continued on page 188)

The Minister as the Forerunner

THE REV. JOHN LEONARD COLE D.D.

IN that ancient and beautifully written guide for the church year — the book of Common Prayer there is inserted on the third Sunday in Advent two rather unexpected Bible readings. The Gospel (John 1:19-28) presents the stalwart figure of the Baptist and Jesus' high compliment to him, while the Epistle (1st Corinthians 4:1-5) is Paul's declaration of independence of man's estimation of him and his sole care to have approbation from the Lord who is to come. To find scriptures dealing with the work and motive of a prophetic ministry at this particular season when all eyes are turned toward Bethlehem rouses a question. Then when the Collect for that day is heard to be "Oh Lord Jesus Christ who at thy first coming didst send thy messengers to prepare thy way for thee; grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just . . .," it is evident that the deliberate purpose of this wise spiritual compendium, the Prayer Book, is to set forth the work of the minister as one of the ways that lead to the Nativity. Considered deeply, it is a logical arrangement to follow Universal Bible Sunday ("These are they which testify of me") with a sort of "ministry" Sunday, both leading up to the full coming or "advent" of God among men.

It is certainly timely that in the hurried pre-Christmas days which are so liable to be a drain on nerves and spiritual abundance as well as upon the family exchequer, there should be some "voice crying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." In preparing so many things, packages, greeting cards, trees and parties, the preparation for the spiritual presence of a Lord is likely to be overlooked. To "keep Christ in Christmas" is still a counsel which some institution or representative needs to keep giving.

Then too, as suggesting the whole important mission of preparing the hearts of the people for Christ's coming, this day is a reminder to the minister of his most thrilling and responsible task. There is no other view of his work, no other objective which can give to the true minister a finer sense of reward or a clearer goal, than this which envisions him as a preparer of the way, a sort of a spiritual "road-builder" into the lives of men and women, boys and girls, for His Advent. Doubtless the highest ambition of every good minister of Jesus Christ, for his lay people is to introduce them so forcefully and frankly and simply and sincerely to Jesus each week that they can take him with them right down into Wall street or Main street or any other street or avenue. His prayer, as he looks down upon his people, week after week is, implicitly or explicitly, that no awkward word, or no overeloquent word, no weariness of flesh or cloudiness of intellect, shall prevent them from seeing the way straight into the presence of Jesus Christ.

If the minister is to fill this role successfully, as a Way-show-er to Christ, he will have to meet two requirements. The first is, to think of himself as a servant of no one ex-

cept Christ himself. As the Apostle put it in a vigorous paragraph in his first letter to Corinth, "The right way for a man to think of us is as Christ's servants . . . I for my part care very little about being examined by you or by any human court. I do not even offer myself for investigation" (Goodspeed). Paul might just as properly have begun "The right way for a minister to think of himself," for it is plain that here lay the secret of his absolute fearlessness as an "ambassador" for Jesus Christ, an impetuous pleader for "righteousness, judgment, and self-control." Certainly nothing can equip the forerunner of the Lord with such clear vision and dauntless courage as that forthright conviction that he is amenable to no less a one, and no other one, than Christ himself. This passion to be a "bond slave" of Christ was most poignantly expressed in the poem called by the name of, and expressing the deepest feelings of, St. Paul:

"Christ's! I am Christ's. And let that name suffice thee.

Aye, for me too, he greatly hath sufficed.

Lo, with no winning words would I entice thee;

Paul has no honor and no friend but Christ." (F. W. H. Myers.)

A spirit of such complete responsibility and accountability to Jesus only will rescue the preacher from the insidious danger of becoming a spokesman for a single group, or a single individual in his parish, who happens to be wealthy or influential or vociferous. It saves him from becoming anybody's private chaplain, and special pleader for any class whether rich or poor, intelligent or ignorant; from the debilitating prac-

tice of going over his honestly prepared sermon on Saturday night to strike out a line here or a paragraph there because it might incur the displeasure of some Brother or Sister Well To Do or Mr. Leading Layman. On the other hand, driven by only one dominant motive, the lordship of Christ himself, he will, on Saturday night, red pencil only those words and phrases which seem to fall short of the true "mind of Christ."

And the other consideration for the preacher who wishes to be the road builder to the Master, is this, that he remember himself to be a "steward of the mysteries of God"sometimes called the "secret truths." Now this view of himself does not set the minister up as being an aristocratic and exclusive possessor of some magical powers, or sacerdotal formulas, by which he can, just because he is a minister, know or do certain things impossible to the unordained. What it does imply is that, because he has been excused from much of the rough and tumble of "earning a living," he does have the privilege of quiet and time to think deeply, meditate quietly, and pray on the highest themes. Great industrial concerns now maintain laboratories for the exclusive use of "research men," whose only task is to pry deeply and persistently into the secrets of nature, dig out some of her "hidden mysteries" and transmit them to engineers for practical application. This is just about what the church has set aside its ministers for, to be "research men" into some of the hidden truths and deeper secrets of God and the spiritual life. Though short-sighted laymen, now and then, inquire sarcastically about their minister, "What does he do with all his

time — and privacy?" the profounder of them detect a difference plainly enough when he comes to speak to them without having had benefit of these periods of soul-searching and truth-exploring. A recent letter to the New York Times complained that with a few rare exceptions no minister today was worth listening to more than three minutes, and then went on to lament that the church, like everything else in this machine age, had "degenerated into a meaningless, soulless whirl of wheels, levers, push buttons and plugs managed by highly competent and specially trained 'executives' and their secretaries." What the complainant evidently missed, and what does make any preacher hardly worth listening to three minutes, is that lack of leisure to think and that willingness to study deeply into a personal experience of divine nature and reality. Thomas Carlyle voiced the longing of very many thoughtful parishioners when he told his new rector, "What this parish needs is a man who knows God first-hand." Evidence of this in a spokesman for God is not gained by any hop, skip and jump method, and it is usually closed to those highly specialized "executives" who are busy with the levers and push buttons and their secretaries. On the part of those who listen to the men who would be like the star that shone on the first Christmas night, i.e., able to lead to the place where the Christ is; on the part of their hearers there must also be two requirements. A fairness, and even a charity, in judging: a reticence in criticism, and a realization of the truth that their sincere spokesman for Christ seeks to make himself accountable to Christ only, tries to stand in the line of the

brave prophets of Israel who pronounced without fear or favor, "Thus saith the Lord." In a New England industrial town a few weeks ago a pastor was forced to resign because he had incurred the displeasure of two wealthy members in preaching upon certain present economic conditions. The minister declared, "The sermons were given in all sincerity in an honest attempt to do my duty as a preacher of righteousness and truth and not for the purpose of uttering individual criticism." But the chairman of his board of trustees is quoted as saying that the only kind of preaching he wanted was that of a "tranquil and comforting sort." Criticism and persecution of Jehovah's prophets makes a free pulpit in many places actually impossible, and although brave modern heralds of the Coming of the Lord in truth and righteousness may not be "sawn asunder," beheaded or stoned to death - there are other ways of crushing the heart out of them.

Then, those who listen in the congregation, and desire to have their minister a safe guide on the way to Bethlehem - or Calvary - will remember that the economic conditions under which the preacher lives makes a distinct difference. Even that hardy fore-runner called the Baptist, praised highly by his Lord as no "reed shaken by the wind," became after a few months in a Roman dungeon in the Jordan valley, a timorous inquirer — "Art thou he . . . or look we for another?" Physical discomfort, honest concern about food, shelter and education for his family, a constant burden of debt, makes a sort of dungeon-like existence for more than

(Continued on page 186)

EDITORIAL

The Day of the Babe

WHEN Livingstone was in central Africa, he asked the dark-skinned natives what became of their river after it had passed beyond the section of the jungle with which they were familiar. For them it had simply rushed by, as a river. It had no upper or lower reaches nor termination in their contemplations concerning it. But not to be daunted by the query and after lengthy consultations, it was decided among the men of mighty wisdom, that the river was swallowed up in the sands of unknown territory beyond.

Great and popular has been the growing concern lest the spirit of Christmas be also swallowed up in the sands, both known and unknown. He who, in gloomy despair of the fortune of the day, foretells of it being lost to coming generations, loses sight of the fact, as did those African natives, that beyond the compass of man's limited conceptions, a mighty, eternal power sweeps and surges, pointed to and travelled toward, by the day itself.

You may dam the stream and foul it. Yet that day comes, when the backwaters above the dam, rising imperceptibly, caress the lip of the man-made retainer and gush over in the full strength of the original stream. The obstacle surmounted and passed, the old sweetness, never absent, only cloyed and obscured with silt and debris of human life, breaks forth anew to brighten and freshen the valley beyond.

I am one of those not over-concerned about the danger of losing the inner spirit of Christmas because of the outward and earthly trappings with which we have adorned(?) it. Should not our greater concern be of the danger of never having found it? Once found, there is no power on earth which can steal from a heart that comforting and assuring throb which came with the finding of the spirit of Christmas. Our concern today, as never before, must become that of spreading the blessed spirit of the day, the true Gospel of Good News.

The so-called dread of a passing Christmas is in reality nothing more serious than the passing, the possible passing of a sight of it. The vision remains even after the sight is gone. Our task, rather than preaching a passing Christmas is to hold it before the eyes that have never seen, brighten its gleam for the eyes which may have grown dim and point again to the blazing star, those eager eyes brightened already in anticipation, before which the Angelic Host shall announce unspeakable glory as long as time lives on.

To this end *The Expositor* extends its joyous greetings to you all. May you know the abiding joys of the abiding day of our abiding Bethlehem Babe.

Din Q

The Great Soul

ON the morrow, as I write, they will honor a man. Thirty-five years ago, he consecrated his life to work with boys. If I err not, his was the first physical layout to be given over, entirely, in the interest of better boys and

through them better men. He was one of a tiny handful of Pioneer boyworkers.

Today he is about to hear the testimony of a group of men and women, numerous of whom have grown up under his expanding influence, gathered to acknowledge publicly, their indebtedness to him, a great soul, not alone in the work of the Y.M.C.A. but a great soul in the advance of humanity.

While that group is rejoicing together, no doubt to the physical and mental discomfort of the one in whose honor they have gathered, another group, spreading like the branches of a stately elm, casts its comforting shadow from one end of the land to the other and represent, known and inknown, the influence of this great soul.

Some, unenlightened, strive for greatness and lacking in comprehension of true greatness and the manner of its achievement, would chart a definite route, which if followed would bring the seeker to his coveted destination. Others, setting up tablets of law say, "So live, within the legal bounds here indicated, and thou shalt achieve greatness." What trifling froth! Was the "whited sepulchre" less than this?

Greatness of soul comes, unannounced, uninvited, in the worthy living of a life. By that I do not mean that great souls know little of the passions, the human frailties, the errors and missteps to which every son of Adam is heir. Great souls are not great for having accumulated a wealth of the so-called human virtues, for after all are not the virtues somewhat geographic and racial in their complexions? Greatness, like the slow-growing, yet sturdy oak, grows from a seed sown, the seed of great purpose.

That soul is great which lives a noble life, which teaches and instructs others in the way of noble living, or by its noble living attracts and charms others toward such a life. That soul is great whose life-ends and purposes are just a wee mite sweeter, truer, purer, higher than a mine-run of life-aims.

Why waste time and effort in coveting greatness as a prize toward which one must consciously and eternally strive? The one approaching greatness of soul is too busy in the living of a noble life to be concerned about its reward. Your reward will take care of itself. Look rather to your manner of life, to your true purpose in life and your day of recognition will inevitably come.

Jm R

Three-Point Technique

THE smaller ship, through no fault of its own, had been crashed by the student pilot scheduled to fly before my friend was to force its nose through the gorgeous cloud banks above, which we were to attempt to get with the camera.

He was not as familiar with the larger ship he was given as with the lighter plane which had been damaged. Hence I was on the ground while he circled above.

Later, in telling of the satisfaction of the larger ship over and above that

of flying the smaller, he spoke of the difference in management necessary to bring it in to a landing. The smaller ship was slow in landing and rather floated in. The larger ship was faster and heavier and the tendency to settle from under the pilot as he brought it down to landing speed was most noticeable.

"The idea, in making a landing," he said, as he described his early experiences with a larger ship, "is to glide down to a few feet above the ground and then level off so that you just skim along over the ground and parallel with it. You should forget you are trying to land. If you really try to land and bring your ship to the ground, you'll probably hit so hard that you will wipe off your landing gear. On the other hand, if you just come down to within a few feet of the ground, level off as though you were planning to keep on flying, but throttle down the engine, the ship will lose its flying speed and very gently settle down onto the field, really landing itself. Many a wrecked plane and broken nose is the direct and almost inevitable result of a deliberate attempt to force the ship to land before it is ready."

Many a "sky-pilot" has had the same experience and come out of it with a damaged plane and a bruised nose. If you are soaring now and unconcerned with things mundane, it might be well to understand the technique of safe landings. High speed and a determination to bring the ship to a smooth three-point landing has marred the serenity of countless pastor-faces. Level off first, slow down and she will land herself, safely.

Let the Blessed Sunshine In

POR three years *The Expositor* has enjoyed its present commodious quarters on the top floor of the building in which it has been housed for thirty years or so. Over that section of the main office set aside for the convenience of *Expositor* readers, where tables and chairs have been supplied that they may in comfort take time in studying the new books which come from the presses of publishers who supply the book needs of the ministry, a huge skylight spreads.

After years on a lower floor, where light came only through the side windows, the idea of light from overhead immediately appealed and fitted with nicety our plan to have a reading and study room for the exclusive use of *Expositor* patrons.

Flush with the ceiling of the room, frosted glass, while not shutting out the light from above, does shut out the wired glass sheets a few feet above which form the outside covering of the light well.

The years pass rapidly in a busy office and as they have passed we have become accustomed to the additional light through the skylight. Becoming used to it, we did not notice a gradual and imperceptible darkening process which has been going on until we have employed high-powered drop lights to insure sufficient light for the subscriber who drops in to read.

Soap is in use. The building is receiving its annual cleansing. This year that cleaning process started, not inside the building as in years gone, but outside and upon the roof of the building a corps of workers found

year that cleaning process started, not inside the building as in years gone, but outside and upon the roof of the building a corps of workers found employment for several days. During the roof clean-up, the superstructure of our skylight came in for its share of soap and water and muscle. The result has been that our artificial lighting equipment has been retired, at least for the time, and the light of the returning sun now breaks through into our office gloriously where for months and years it has been stopped at the outer skylight by the accumulated grime and soot and dirt which gathered as it can only gather in a downtown city district.

How frequently we discover the needlessness of the artificial, even after years of its employment, when opaque accumulations are washed away and the rays of the original source of light are again permitted entrance.

The PREACHER ULPIT

"As is the workman so is the work."

Around the Christmas Cradle

THE REV. C. H. NABERS, D.D., Greenville, S. C.

Matt. 1:18.

WE do not keep Christmas when we hark back to glad memories of happy childhood—snow, sleigh riding, and live again in a day best described by Washington Irving in his Sketches of English country life a century ago.

We do not keep Christmas when we swap gifts with relatives and friends, "invite and be invited," and with candy, cake and company drown our ears to the whisper of the angel chorus.

It is Christmas, the season of the year when the world turns back towards the manger-cradle in Bethlehem, the village less than half a dozen miles south of Jerusalem in a far-away land of sacred story.

We can best keep the Christmas if

we remember its religious meaning, and journey back, not to our child-hood, but to the childhood of Jesus, stand around the cradle at Bethlehem, and study well the sort of men and women with whom we stand.

LABOR

Labor was present at the cradle of Christ. "There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. The angel of the Lord came upon them, the glory of the Lord shone around about them. The angel said, 'I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, Christ the Lord.' With the angel there was a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.' As the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem.' They came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger."

God never brings a revelation of Himself to the lazy or to the idle when He wants men for divine service. The shepherds, simple working folk, were earliest at the cradle of Jesus. The simple working people of every land and age have been men and women who receive a call from the Master. Moses was busy feeding his flock at Horeb. Gideon was threshing wheat by the winepress. William Carey was making and mending shoes and the list could be prolonged indefinitely. There is a glory about labor and the laborer written upon every page of religion and we see laboring men, represented by the shepherds, bowing in adoration at the cradle of the Saviour.

LEARNING

Learning was present at the cradle of the Christ. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.' The star went before them till it came and stood over the place where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. When they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.'

Representatives of the best learning of the age bowed at the Christ-

mas cradle. Learning has always grown best in the atmosphere of religion. Gifted men of all ages and all realms of culture have done their best work and grasped their biggest opportunities when "On His Master's Service." Learning still bows low before the cradle of the Christ.

In these stirring days what the church needs next to a spirit of grace and of supplication is a Renaissance, a revival of godly learning. "I am persuaded," wrote Martin Luther, "... that without skill in letters it is quite impossible for pure theology to stand; even as heretofore, when they were ruined, it shared their miserable overthrow. Nay, I see that there never has been any notable revelation of God's Word unless He has first prepared the way by the rise and flourishing of languages and letters as forerunners." One use of sanctified scholarship needed today is that by discovering the inexhaustible fullness of Holy Scripture it enables us to welcome without disquietude the larger light which is continually breaking in upon earnest minds and perceive how, so far from discrediting the ancient and imperishable faith, it illumines it and reveals herein a deeper and diviner truth. Learning becomes greater when it bows before the Christmas cradle.

LONELINESS

Loneliness was present at the cradle of the Christ. In the temple, "there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers day and night. And she

coming in at that instant gave thanks unto the Lord, and spoke of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Here was a lonely servant of the Lord who found comradeship divine as she sees the Child Jesus.

There is much of loneliness in life. Loneliness is hard to bear. Often men in high places are incredibly lonely. You can survive anything if you have a loyal, dependable companion. A newspaper owner said to a member of his staff, "It is such beautiful weather, I wish I could get away for a few days." "Why not go, sir?" asked his assistant, knowing that there were few things his chief could not afford. "Ah," he replied, "I've no one to go with."

At Christmas loneliness is hardest for men and women out of relationship with their fellows and out of touch with God. Ever since the aged eves of old Anna looked upon the babe in the temple, lonely men and women had found in Christ a cure for their loneliness. A curious thing about loneliness is that if somebody is near and within call, you never feel solitary, even if both are silent. The message of Christmas, as exampled in the incident of lonely Anna, is that God is so near that none of his children need suffer loneliness. Loneliness is cured at the cradle of the Christ.

LAW

Law was present at the cradle of the Christ. "There was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. It was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. He came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he Him up in his arms and blessed God." Fitting that a representative of Hebrew law should give praise to Jehovah at the birth of Jesus! Law has a place there.

In more than one sense law was present at the Christmas cradle. Christ came in fulfillment of law. The Gospel of Matthew has a solemn refrain which occurs over and over again like the chant of the Greek tragic chorus: "And thus it was fulfilled." All these fulfillments were the deeds of Jesus in perfect accord with some law and prophecy of Old Testament days. He was the fulfillment of the rites and ceremonies instituted during the years when the chosen tribes wandered in the wilderness between Canaan and Egypt. He fulfills not only the letter of the law, but is the embodiment of the spirit beneath all law, the deep hidden meaning of the dream within the soul of man for peace and harmony in personality and continent.

Not only was law present at the cradle of the Saviour in that Iesus fulfilled ecclesiastical law, but law was present in that modern law for the world derives its inspiration and meaning from those sentences which the Master spoke in the temple courts of Jerusalem, beside the tiny waves of Galilee, and while walking over rough paths beside grazing flocks or ploughed fields. Law today — the codification of the experience of the race as it has travelled over rough lands and towards lofty plateaux - finds its most permanent statement when it comes most in accord with His thought and speech. His word erased the traditions of the past, and launched into the brightness of a new and better day: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time... but I say unto you." He is our law. In His law is our peace, and His peace is our law.

LOVE

Love was present at the cradle of the Christ. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with Child of the Holy Ghost. The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.' Then Joseph did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called His name Jesus." The home into which the divine Son of God entered the world was a home of love. Where Jesus comes, there is always love.

Jesus gave a deeper meaning to the word. He makes it the least incomplete definition of divinity when He inspired John to write: "God is love."

He makes it give significance to the Incarnation and meaning to His ministry as He quietly talks in the evening with a ruler of the Jews: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He makes it the test of life and the greatest of things which cannot be disturbed: "And now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three, but the greatest of these is love."

Love binds into completeness and unity all else present at the cradle in Bethlehem. Learning bows before Christ and the Christian religion by the creation in education of a spirit born of love. Labor finds its difficulties solved by the blessedness which Jesus brings into human life by the injection of love into the relationships of the working man. Law is fulfilled in Christ when the Master summed up all the commands of the olden days by a single word, "Love," and made two edicts, one which reached to God and the other which encircled man. Loneliness is cured because the folks who live in love can never be alone. Love is God's Christmas gift to the world.

For Times Like These

THE REV. HAROLD E. CARLSON, Wasco, California.

"I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus . . . that thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine . . . which ministers questionings, rather a stewardship which is in faith." I Timothy 1:3-4.

THE years since the War have witnessed the greatest wave of prosperity and the keenest financial

depression in history. The depression
— the twentieth in the United States
— followed, in accordance with economic law, the period of inflated values which began at the close of the War and came to an end with the crash of the stock market in October, 1929. After nearly three years this depression has permeated every phase of American life.

Probably no institution in our country feels more keenly this depression than the Church. Congress is

having tremendous difficulties in spite of its power to levy taxes. But the Church is entrusted to its members and is maintained and promoted by their willingness. And it must come through these troublous days not so much by external pressure as by in-

ward principle.

We are, to be sure, in the grip of an industrial depression, but it will not be a spiritual depression for the Church unless she fails to recognize that she must put her house in order. Days of prosperity are deceiving; days of depression are revealing. In balmy days matters of vital concern to spiritual life are largely taken for granted, but in days like these they are brought into the light where, if found fundamentally sound, they are clarified and vitalized. Better times developed a sense and habit of giving to the Church, but these days we are confronting the question whether or not we are really in debt to the Church. While some are forsaking their spiritual heritage because they are annoyed by the calls of the Church to give of what they think is their own, there are a host of others who are learning that they must pay rather than give to the Church. We entered the depression with a more or less common fallacy on the part of many in the Church that stewardship is a practice to be accepted or rejected at will, rather than a faith and a way of life. These days must test whether or not the Church can long endure under a practice which is other than right doctrine as suggested by the words of St. Paul.

The Church is confronted by three

urgent needs in these days.

I. MORE REAL GOSPEL

The text seems to imply that Timothy had desired to accompany Paul to Macedonia but the Apostle persuaded him to abide at Ephesus. The masterly Shepherd of the Early Church saw clearly that the Church at Ephesus could not long endure so long as it sought to live on other than right doctrine. He knew that it needed the vitalizing affirmations which do not "minister questionings." It was in need of positive assurance concerning Christ.

Days of prosperity tend to call forth a type of preaching speculative rather than essentially evangelical. They prompt preaching other than "right doctrine." As ministers we have yielded to the temptation to make affirmations concerning things that won recognition for ourselves as students of politics and economics and science. But in all these efforts we have not won men's hearts to faith in Christ.

The extreme need of the Church these days leads us back to Him who is her Lord. Our preaching must be about Him that He may make His own appeal in these days of stress and strain. Our messages must focus upon His words and works and life and death. And He will win the allegiance of men. We need only to ring loud and clear the testing words of Jesus, "Lovest thou Me?" There has never been a time in our generation when it has been as urgent for the Church to throne Jesus as Lord of men's lives. The times demand preaching which will convict men of their debt to Christ for salvation.

Some churches are today learning that they need not fear so long as there is love to Christ, warm and changeless, that can survive time and circumstance. In spite of extreme financial difficulties there is money available to carry on their work so

long as their spiritual pulse is in healthy condition. The church that is suffering financially needs thorough spiritual examination. The diagnosis may reveal a spiritual disease. When the heart of the Church stops beating nothing material will save it. Strychnine doses of high pressure methods of finance will then avail nothing. The Church must be reborn. It must be baptized with a new and clear understanding that every professing follower of Jesus is a steward to God for all he is and has. The Church can no more come through the depression victoriously with a religion wanting in vital resistance, than a sick man exposed to the elements can safely pass through a cold winter. She needs a tonic of more real Gospel.

II. MORE REAL STEWARDSHIP

St. Paul exhorted Timothy to tarry in Ephesus and teach the sound doctrine of stewardship. He saw that the Ephesian Church must substitute a living declaration of stewardship for speculation about it if the Church should be saved. What was true of that single church in Paul's time is true of the whole Church today.

Some people of means who in prosperous days loudly proclaimed the doctrine of stewardship to God of one's time and talents and money have failed to put it into effect when these real testing days came. Only the prophet's fire and heroic high pressure campaigns for funds in the Church have succeeded in persuading them to manifest tokens of their former declaration. These days demand deepening and clarifying of the doctrine of stewardship. During prosperous days the work of the Church went on easily enough when a fair

proportion of the membership each did a bit. Few then felt it keenly. But today, after many have ceased giving their mite, the remnant feel keenly the responsibility. Giving to the support of the Church in these days reveals the character of the giver as never before.

The people who give to the Church today do so because they have sufficient motive prompting them. When the average contributor today gives a dollar to the Church it is because he is imbued with some idea or other of the reality of the need. In the days of prosperity many contributors to the Church were remote from giving in a real sense. It was merely letting a dollar go. But today, for the average contributor, it is really giving, for it invariably means giving up. And when giving means giving up, it approximates at least, what we seek to convey by the teaching of the Cross of Christ. But there are too few who have remained faithful in this crisis. The Church today needs more real stewardship.

III. MORE REAL FAITH

Paul exhorted Timothy to teach not merely stewardship, but significantly more, "stewardship which is in faith." He knew that the Ephesian Church stood in need of a doctrine which prompted more than the surrender of time and talents and money. It needed a doctrine of stewardship which consecrated themselves. And this is the crying need of the Church today.

Better days may prompt the surrender of the dollar, but times like these call for the consecration of our faith. We have had enough of the kind of stewardship which has answered the appeals of the Church

with the death-knell: "I need to hold my money. What with one thing and another I do not know what I am coming to." There has been a kind of stewardship in the Church that has stopped just short of the vital point of the consecration of oneself. It is one of the ironies of life that in days of prosperity some men have had a confidence in themselves because of the power represented by the money coming into their coffers. Then in times like these they are possessed by a fear lest in parting with any of their money they shall become powerless. But today the Church calls for a stewardship which says: "Come what will, my life is Thine."

The beneficence which flowed freely in better days was not so much a test of real stewardship as the beneficence in these days. It is now a test of our stewardship to God in faith. It is a real test of our life at the fountain source. Are we really crucified with Christ? Is it no longer we that live but Christ that liveth in us? Is the life which we now live in the flesh

a life we live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God who loved us and gave Himself up for us?

"Stewardship which is in faith" in these days calls us into the land of sacrifice. Here we have brought home to us more clearly the sacrifice of the Cross of Christ. And when a man knows for a certainty that he owes everything to the Cross he does everything in the light of the Cross. The dollar then bears for him more clearly the superscription of a God of love. And he will not tolerate the thought of Christ compelled to stand in the attitude of a beggar pleading for a dole. He is ready to give more than bloodless gifts - that which in better days was what he could spare. He feels that he must give what he can ill spare — a very part of himself.

Shall we meet these urgent needs of the Church in these days — more real Gospel, more real stewardship, more real faith? It is up to us to die with the old Church or participate in the creation of a new Church in the making.

Illustrations

earls for Preachers HE REV. WILLIAM J. HART, D.D.

SUS THE WORLD'S GREATEST ERSONALITY

Acts 4:12. "And in no other is the great salvation be found" (Weymouth).

Jesus is still the most interesting fact in our talogue of facts, is still the most interesting resonality in the world's list of personalities. He still the world's flashing diamond. Jesus is not gotten: Jesus is unforgettable.— Dr. John Short The British Weekly.

"ELL IT "CHRISTMAS"

Matt. 2:1. "When Jesus was born."

Don't use the abominable abbreviation Xmas. by the beautiful word Christmas the courtesy spelling it in full.— From a circular sent out the National Retail & Dry Goods Association.

CHRISTMAS AN ALL-YEAR FESTIVAL

Luke 2:10. "Good news of great joy — joy for all the people" (Weymouth).

I will keep Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.— Charles Dickens.

FOUND CHRISTIAN PHYSICIAN NEAR SEA OF GALILEE

Job 2:12. "Lifted up their eyes afar off."

While visiting the Sea of Galilee with a friend, many years ago, we were overtaken by the torrid wind which the natives call the Sirocco. My companion was prostrated by the heat and I was at my wit's end with anxiety. The nearest inn was full and had no proper place in which to care for a sick person. But it chanced that at Tiberias there was a Christian mission of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, with its hospital and its parsonage. In an incredibly short time the invalid was reposing in a

comfortable bed, in a cool room, with the best of attendance from a doctor and a trained nurse. The doctor and the nurse were there rather than in Edinburgh or in Dundee because they believed that Jesus' words to his disciples about going into all the world to heal the sick were to be taken literally, and to be applied to the suffering Jews and Arabs of Palestine as well as to their fellow countrymen in Scotland.— Prof. William Adams Brown, in "Beliefs That Matter."

BOTH BISHOP AND BANKER PLAYED SANTA CLAUS

Ezek. 3:15. "I sat where they sat, and remained there among them . . . seven days."

The Volunteers of America station about two hundred Santas during the Christmas season in New York City, to ring the bells by the side of the chimneys in which folks may place their gifts for the needy. Said Dr. Alton M. Young, an executive of the organization:

"For six years one of our most enthusiastic Santas was a retired bishop, who donned the Santa Claus costume for sheer love of the task it involved. No day was too cold for him, and he became a beloved and familiar character on the corner at which he served. Unbelievable as it may seem, there is an important official of a bank who plays Santa Claus before one of our chimneys three or four hours a day for about a week each year. He regards this as a combination of relaxation and service. He is not content to give a monetary contribution alone, and employs this means of lending other assistance."—Bertram Reinitz, in the New York Times.

THE MOUNT OF VISION

Prov. 29:18. "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

As one climbs a great mountain, the paths which one can choose decrease in number as one approaches the top. There in the heights, divergent ways and by-paths disappear. At last, near the top, only one way is left, and that goes straight up toward the peak from which vast things can be seen.— Prof. Rufus M. Jones, in "New Studies in Mystical Religion."

"THIS IS HE!"

Psa. 27:1. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"

What power would mark the preacher's words if he could say with Isaac Penington: "This is He, this is He: there is no other. This is He whom I have waited for and sought after from my childhood. I have met with my God. I have met with my Saviour. I have felt the healing drop upon my soul from under his wings."— Prof. Rufus M. Jones, in "New Studies in Mystical Religion."

THE FRUIT OF THE TREE

Matt. 7:20. "Wherefore by their fruits ye she know them."

Religion is not a mere sentimentality. It is practical, life-giving, healthful fruit - not posic but apples. "Oh," says somebody, "I don't s what your garden of the Church has yielded In reply, I ask, "Where did your asylums con from and your hospitals and your institutions mercy?" Christ planted every one of them in H garden. When Christ gave sight to Bartimaeus, I laid the corner-stone to every blind asylum th has ever been built. When Christ soothed t demoniac of Galilee, He laid the corner-stone every lunatic asylum that has ever been esta lished. When Christ said to the sick man. "Ta up thy bed and walk," He laid the corner-sto of every hospital the world has ever seen. Who Christ said, "I was in prison, and ye visited Me He laid the corner-stone of every prison-refor association ever organized. The Church of Chri is a glorious garden, and it is full of fruit.— I T. DeWitt Talmage.

RADIANT EXPECTANCY

Psa. 62:5. "My expectation."

Said a business man recently, "A young sale man came into my office the other day and he w radiantly expectant. His smile was beautiful see. He was perfectly sure of his goods and that was going to give him an order, and I did because have so few radiant salesmen."— Adult Bil Class Monthly.

MELTING SWEETNESS IN THE NAME OF JESUS

Rom. 8:39. "The love of God which rests upon in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Weymouth).

James Gilmour, of Mongolia, was a valiant so whose work, like that of Livingstone, carried hi to lonely places. He wrote to a Cheshunt Colle fellow-student just before his departure f China:

"Companions I can scarcely hope to meet, as the feeling of being alone comes over me till think of Christ and his blessed promise, 'Lo, I a with you alway, even to the end of the worl No one who does not go away, leaving all a going alone, can feel the force of this promise; a when I begin to feel my heart threatening to down, I betake myself to this companionship, ar thank God, I have felt the blessedness of the promise rushing over me repeatedly when I kn down and spoke to Jesus as a present companio from whom I feel sure to find sympathy. I ha felt a tingle of delight thrilling over me as I f his presence, and thought that wherever I may he is still with me. I have once or twice lately f a melting sweetness in the name of Jesus as spoke to him and told him my trouble. Yes, a e trouble went away, and I arose all right. Is it blessed of Christ to care so much about us or feeble men, so sinful and so careless about noring him? The moment we come to him he is ady with his consolations for us."—Quoted by ne T. Stoddart, in "Private Prayer in Christian

EHOLDING THE MAN IN THE OUNTAIN

Heb. 8:5. "The pattern . . . in the mount."

2 Cor. 3:18. "We... beholding... are changed to the same image."

It was my privilege one lovely summer day to the "old man in the mountains," that massive one face, lifted high in the New Hampshire hills.

4 our arrival in the sunlit valley we found that any others had come on the same errand. To there was something most impressive in the that a high mountain range should culminate

a humanlike countenance that had, undisped, weathered the severe storms of centuries d still seemed to be gazing into the vast spaces though expecting to see some new army of God the march. Insensitive indeed must have been ery spectator that day who did not return home that "pattern in the mount" deeply etched the tablets of his memory.

The most wonderful phenomenon in this moral liverse of God is the personality of Jesus; "in m the light of the knowledge of the glory of od shineth." The same yesterday, today, and ever, He serenely challenges all the storms and anges of the passing era and ever looks forward the victorious manifestation of the sons of men. attracts to Him men and women of every age, filling in every generation the words of promise, and I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto b." The impress of His own radiant countenance indelibly stamped on all who commune with m, "we are all transformed into the same image we behold His glory with unveiled face."— Prof. Newton Davies.

RMON NEEDED THREE MORE WORDS

Acts 16:31. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

I heard recently of two prominent men who had stened to a great preacher and had heard a great mon. It moved them deeply. They walked to-ther for a time in silence, and then one asked the mer, "What did you think of the sermon?" The ply was, "It was the greatest sermon I ever ard, except for the lack of three words, 'Come Jesus.'"—Bishop Herbert Welch.

INRISE

Mal. 4:2. "Unto you that fear my name shall the of righteousness arise with healing in his ags."

This illustration of sunrise has been given by . W. A. Brown in "Pathways to Certainty:"

"Just after dawn, one summer day, I stood on the hill that rises above Lake Chautauqua and watched the sun struggling to make its way through the clouds. The lake was covered with a sea of golden mist. One was conscious of light and glow and warmth and motion. But as the mists rose and fell, circled and returned, and curved themselves into fanciful and graceful shapes that were never twice the same, the sun still remained hidden. One knew that it was there. One could see its glow; one could feel its warmth; one rejoiced in the beauty of its handiwork. But the sun itself remained hidden."

MORE PRAISE NEEDED IN CHURCHES

Psa. 146:2. "While I live will I praise the Lord; I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being."

"I wish," said a lovely old lady to Dr. Henry van Dyke, "that the churches would learn how to praise God. I attend so many doleful services. It does me more good to praise God than anything else I do."

Isaac Watts calls upon people to praise the Lord in these words:

"Praise ye the Lord! 'tis good to raise Your hearts and voices in his praise."

"BIRTHDAY GIFTS FROM KING WINTER"

Job 37:6. "For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth."

Job 38:22. "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?"

Just before Christmas, 1931, the Associated Press gave to the world the news of the death of "The Snowflake Man." This was Mr. Wilson A. Bentley, who was born in Jericho, Vermont, educated in the schools of the little community, and became the world's foremost authority on snowflakes. Dying at the age of sixty-seven, he had for forty-seven years been making photographs of snowflakes; and also of "frost crystals, ice crystals, hail, dew, clouds, and raindrops." He is the author of an article on frost and snow in the Encyclopedia Britannica; and co-author of a book on "Snow Crystals." His whole life was spent in the little community where he was born, and where he began work as a farmer. Snow crystals were his youthful hobby, and eventually became his life-study. Jewelers, especially, used his photographs for designs. This man made more than five thousand photographs of snow crystals near his own home. He was one of the few men of all history who could answer the question found in Job (38:22) "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?"

A single snowstorm in February, 1928, left more than one hundred new designs in snowflakes, which he photographed. After a snowstorm he used to say that he had received "a birthday gift from King Winter." Of the many photographs which he made of snowflakes no two were alike.

GOLD ADDED TO THE SUNSET

Prov. 25:11. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

When Oliver Wendell Holmes, son of the distinguished New England poet, resigned as Justice of the United States Supreme Court in January, 1932, being almost ninety-one years of age, he concluded his resignation by saying: "My last word should be one of grateful thanks." President Hoover, in accepting the resignation said: "I know of no American retiring from public service with such a sense of affection and devotion of the whole people."

His associates of the United States Supreme Court sent a letter to Justice Holmes in which they expressed their affection for him. To this the veteran replied:

"My dear Brethren: You must let me call you so once more. Your more than kind, your generous letter touches me to the bottom of my heart. The long (he had been a member of the supreme court bench for thirty years) and intimate association with men who so command my respect and admiration could not but fix my affection as well. For such little time as may be left for me I shall treasure it as adding gold to the sunset."

A KINDLY MILLIONAIRE NEIGHBOR

Eph. 4:32. "And be ye kind one to another."

In the little town in which he lives on the north shore of Long Island, J. Pierpont Morgan is not merely a financial prince; he is a neighbor, kindly and democratic. He leads a simple, friendly life. His neighbors like his smile, and say the wrinkles at the corners of his eyes come from laughing with the world, not at it. He spent \$1,000,000 on a memorial park in memory of his wife, which will be the joy of the children and grown folk; for he is just a neighbor to the folk there.— The Christian Endeavor World.

PUTTING GOD INTO HER POEMS

Psa. 121:2. "Jehovah, who made heaven and earth." (R. V.)

"When I first began to write, some one said to me, 'You always put God into your poems, don't you?"

Remembering the person who made that remark I fear it was meant as an adverse bit of criticism. Yet, looking back, I see that I always did mention God, and I am proud of it now, for God fitted naturally into each hour of Heaven that the making of those youthful poems brought to me. Although I do not always name the Deity in my poems now, I am certain that he is always in them if they are the sort of work worthy of the name of poetry, as I hope a few of my efforts are.— Violet Alleyn Storey in "The Profits of Poetry" in Good Housekeeping.

A LITTLE GIRL'S PRAYERS

Psa. 121:1. "Whence cometh my help."

For 21 days Sallee Louise Dalton, 10, daught of a Brooklyn broker, lay in the artificial lu at Kings County Hospital, a victim of paralys and prayed.

Never before has the life of a paralysis vict been sustained that long through artificial respin tion. Yesterday they took Sallee out of the respin tor. The battle was won.

In the first few days of her long fight she near broke the hearts of the attendant physicians telling them what she was going to do when s got out. They had no hope but they kept her ho alive. And the faith that moves mountains help that little girl to live.

Science can go only so far. Beyond that is trealm of the spirit which every physician reconizes. Faith is a large part of it—faith and he and desire.—Binghamton Press.

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

The following prayer was selected because of comprehensiveness by the editor of the Utica Da Press that its readers might have it in their hon at Christmastide:

God of all the Ages and of the Dayspring with these hearts of ours, we bless thy Name for t Story of long ago, which becomes our story, t and shall touch with its glory the souls of men f ever. We praise thee for the good tidings of gre joy through thy Wondrous Child.

We think of the Babe, so small and tender, lyin the straw of the manger among the patibeasts, whose quiet breathing was his lullal And we pray that we may so reverence the I within ourselves that we may not injure bird beast in malice or carelessness, or for the sake vanity; but, having tenderness for all innocthings, may rejoice in the friendship of faith creatures.

We think of that Night of waiting, amid thaste and noise of the time, when Mary Mot lay listening to the hurried footsteps of travel and all the rough sounds of the inn. And we pi for all the Mothers of babes soon to be born; a pray that the compassion of men may be upon young Children, lest in our greedy tumult a blind speed we bring upon ourselves the condemtion of those who cause little ones to perish.

We think of the Wise Men, who came with the Gifts, following the Star. And we pray that too the knowledge and power which men have gain by discovering the secrets of earth and sky me be devoted to the good of the world and not ill, and may be used to save life and not to destit. We pray that the children of the future mescape the doom of war, and that all the sons men may come together within the City of Light.

We think of the Shepherds, who heard the g

ings while doing their daily work, abiding in the id. And we pray for all toilers to whom this ppy season means weary hands and feet and ag hours of labor. May they be visited by the ong comfort which has its abiding place in common things! And we pray for those in distress bease no man has hired them. May they find uge in the help of Man; and may all the world we new hope!

We think of all who heard the Song in the Night, unding faint and far away. And we pray for ose who will keep their Christmas in strange aces and away from their dear homes. We pray for those upon whom the enchanted season throws a shadow of happy years gone by. May they light candles of patience, kindness and grateful memory, even when there are dark corners in their hearts. So may all our separations show us how far love can reach, and our broken circles teach us how closely love can bind.

God of all the Ages and of the Light that lighteth every man, we bless thy Holy Name; and with the multitude of the heavenly host and with the magnitude of the lowly ones of earth, we praise thee, saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.— The Rev. V. T. Pomeroy, in The Christian Register.

The Homiletic Year—December

THE REV. CHARLES HADDON NABERS, D.D.

ELP FROM THE HILLS

Scripture: Psalm 121.

Text: Psalm 121:1-2. "I will lift up mine eyes ato the hills, from whence cometh my help. My lp cometh from the Lord which made heaven ad earth." Moffatt's Translation: "I lift mine es to the mountains; ah, where is help to come om? Help cometh from the Eternal who made eaven and earth."

This 121st psalm is one of the 15 psalms known our King James version as Songs of Degrees, and

Dr. James Moffatt's modern translation as ilgrim Song. The designation is the same lese were songs from the Hebrew hymn-book sed by the pilgrims on the way to Jerusalem to tend the great feasts of the year, particularly be Feast of the Passover. The 121st psalm was ways used as these pilgrim bands encamped before he holy city.

In the first verses there are three great sug-

Here we have The Soul's Resolution: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills."

 With an overpowering sense of need brought on by the difficulties of life, the soul resolves upon an upward look.

Edward Everett Hale had a motto which he once quoted to Booker T. Washington: "Look up, not down; out, not in; forward, not backward."

The opening sentence in this song is a resolution to look away from present disturbing circumstances, far away from the lower facts

 which, of course, are facts — to the great supreme fact.

We walk through life, if we walk at all, and do not crawl, by faith, and not by the facts which our senses reveal to us. Faith is the protest of something indominable in the soul against the domination of the every-day facts. Take cognizance of these facts only that we may measure them against the great Fact — the fact of God. When Peter looked unto Jesus, he walked on the waves of Galilee, and men are doing greater things today when they keep in mind the supreme fact of God. We must keep an upward look with our faces turned towards the Master as the Hebrews in the wilderness turned towards the serpent of brass set high above the congregation on a pole. Keep our attention off smaller matters.

3. We need also to look away from our very selves — the limitations, the unworthinesses, the defeats which we experience from day to day, from the sins which have settled down so deep in our lives unto Him who can give deliverance.

One must practice a thorough self-examination, but there is also a danger of ultra-introspection, of dwelling too much upon our own selves.

Do not get the habit of not feeling very well either physically or spiritually. Let us not think unduly about what failures we are. Look up! Days of fasting and prayer are of benefit to the soul only as during these occasions we look towards Christ. The upward look after all is the only normal look for man. The Greek word for man, Anthropos, we need to be reminded often, means, "the being with the upward look." Modern men in western lands should live up to it. There are so many temptations to look otherwise. There is the old story of the man who once discovered in the pavement's edge a gold coin. Ever after-

wards he looked downward. He found several more coins but think how much he missed — the flowers, the sky, and the

4. The hills towards which the Psalmist resolved to look are not the help for one's soul, but they do suggest the help one can find.

Nature has a spiritual significance, and the Bible is always suggesting a devotional use of it. The mountains suggest the eternity of God; the oceans suggest the depths of the divine love; the rivers suggest the peace which comes to the Christian believer.

Coleridge was lost in awe as he gazed upon a mountain, Wordsworth was inspired as he saw the glory of a sunrise; Sidney Lanier was deeply moved as he looked upon the forest and wrote "A Ballad of Trees and Their Master." We may not all be poets, but there is enough poetry in each of us to make a devotional use of nature. That is why it is good in the summer months to sit beside the beach, and watch the unresting waters roll upon the sandy shores, and to stand upon the mountains and look into the distance where the peaks can hardly be counted.

II. Here we Have also The Soul's Question: "From

whence cometh my help?"

1. This is the inevitable question of needy humanity. It is the daily query of every life. Every day a thousand needs arise in a thousand different forms.

Cry for physical help, for economic help, for intellectual help, for spiritual aid.

- 2. No doubt this cry is suggested from the look at the hills, for the sight of the stupendous mountains reminds man of his impotency and insignificance.
- 3. The existence of a belief in a supreme Being, a faith that is more potent among the untutored races, goes to prove its instinctive character. But not every view of God will suffice for the needs of man's soul. Neither the priesthood of Baal, nor the ritual of Islam, nor the view of God which some members of our American churches hold is satisfying unto the soul when it is seeking that help which it must have.
- 4. In this question is implied the matter of Christian service, for it is not only our own question, but that of many others around us who are looking for us to guide them towards truth. We can guide them by a sort of living which recommends unquestionably the direction we ourselves have taken, and we can guide them by a personal touch which often clinches a half-formed resolve long inert within the heart of a seeker for truth.

When the great records are made up. perhaps the greatest crime of all for the modern church member will be the crime of not having lived his very best.

- III. Here we have also the Soul's Assurance: "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heave and earth." Help comes from the self-existan Jehovah, the One who gave to the everlasting hills their age.
 - 1. With the psalmist as well as with us I gathe that this assurance came at a time when al other avenues of help had been closed.

Wealth had failed, as it has failed in ou day. It fails to stay, and it fails to satisfy even during its transient existence.

Position has failed, personal position o national position has failed to bring isola tion and protection. In 1918 the western world got sick because of an outbreak o so-called Spanish influenza in a far-of section of Chinese Turkestan. We were physically ill, because these people on the other side of the world would not keep thei germs at home. In these days the flicker o American talkies, the jarring jazz of Ameri can broadcasting stations breaks the silences of all the continents. We are make ing other peoples spiritually sick because we wont keep our ideas at home.

Alliances have failed. Social, national

economic.

2. This assurance of help from the God who made heaven and earth is an assurance which comes not from without, but from within

> There is always this answer to the crie of the heart for help whenever we bend the ear to listen to our soul. The answer is complete; when this is said, nothing ye remains to be said.

3. This answer uplifts the life of every man.

The man digging a ditch through the streets of our city, works in the mud and dust, but sings, "I'm a Child of the King."

A washerwoman in a humble cottage sang: "I've a Saviour for a Friend, Who will keep me Till the End."

4. The rest of the verses of the 121st psalm describe in detail the help which our Goo gives to the assured soul of man.

> The Creator of the Heavens is thy in dividual keeper. The Keyword in the description is "Kept," repeated with synonyms a half dozen times. We are kept by the power and by the love of our God Let this be our life motto.

RAMESES' COMPROMISE AND OURS

Scripture: Exodus 10th Chapter.

Text: Exodus 10:8-9: "Pharaoh said unto them . . who are they that shall go? And Moses said We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the Lord."

Introduction: The story of the long contest besen the ruler of Egypt and the leader of Israel mailiar. Moses stated clearly the demand which ded makes for the service of His people. Again a signs and wonders are done in the ded the ruler refused to accede to the demands of sees, but as the plagues bear down heavier upon people he tries to effect a compromise. So dern are these compromises which the ancient typtian ruler seeks to make that they furnish wonderful lesson to us in our dealings with the I of God today.

Pharaoh's First Attempt at Compromise was to induce the Hebrews to do their sacrificing unto Jehovah in Egypt. "Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land."

- 1. This seemed a reasonable request. Surely an altar could be erected beside the Nile as well as beside the Jordan, and before the multitudes of the worshippers of Ammon-Ra, it would be a wholesome thing to see men bowing before Jehovah. Egypt should have the spectacle of a people bowing before the great Unseen Ruler of the hearts of men.
- 2. But the sin in the request and the evil that lay in yielding to it is apparent in the reply of Moses: "It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God . . . and will they not stone us?" Worship in Egypt would be the worship of just one more god in the Egyptian Pantheon. Slaves could not feel free to worship surrounded by their masters. It was an effort to make the Hebrews surrender all that was distinctive and peculiar in their faith, and to conform as conform they must if they worshipped in Egypt— to the customs of the people around them.
- 3. We face the same temptation today. Trickery in politics, chicanery in business, beclouded issues before the public mind—it is still easier to worship God in the land—the land of politics, business and social conformity—than it is to dwell apart and erect our altars in a clean new valley.
- I. Pharaoh's Second Attempt at Compromise was to lead the Hebrews to Stay very close to the borders of the land which was enslaving them. "Pharaoh said, I will let you go that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away."
- You can get away from the people for a brief period, but stay along the border of the land. Hang on to the fruits and the grain of Egypt with one hand while the other kindles a fire beneath the altar of God.
- 2. We have the same sort of compromise offered today: "We want to be in the church, but we do not want to be very far away from the world. We want to sit at the communion

- table, but we want to come back and sit at other tables where men of the world do things which are not in line with the teachings of Jesus."
- 3. Most of the criticism against the church today would be silenced if church members did not try to retain leadership in the church and at the same time keep rather in harmony with the world. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord," is needed today.
- III. Pharaoh's Third attempt at Compromise was to induce the men of the Hebrew people to go on the mission of sacrifice, but to leave their little ones behind in the land of Egypt: "Not so: go now ye that are men and serve the Lord."
 - 1. On the face of it this seems another reasonable proposition. Some men today think it to be, by the way they live. Leave the children out of worship. The journey into the wilderness will be too hard on them. Not only so, the symbolism of worship is beyond the comprehension of juvenile minds. They would not understand; they would not be interested. They might as well be comfortable with their play around the pylons of the Egyptian temples while the men are away at worship.
 - 2. But one could not imagine Rameses being a friend to the Hebrew children he was rather the instigator of their destruction. Looking deeply into the suggestion, one easily sees why Moses could not accept it. Can a congregation worship without the boys and girls? Surely not! If the next generation is to maintain Christianity, ours must teach the things of God to our children. Because Moses knew this, he at once refused the offer.
 - 3. The same compromise comes in the form of many modern temptations. "Do not make your religion interfere with the social life of boys and girls—let them have a good time. If you want to be peculiar, be peculiar, but do not make your religion a nuisance to your boys and girls. Why should boys and girls stay for the church services. They won't be interested. They will not understand. Let them go on back home. It is too hard for them to sit through two services on Sunday morning. Let them play." The irreligion of our rising generation is one of the prices we are now paying for such conduct.
- IV. Pharaoh's Fourth and Final Attempt at Compromise was to suggest that the Hebrew community might go out into the wilderness to worship Jehovah, but that their material wealth was to remain in the land of the Nile: "And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the Lord: only let your flocks and your herds be stayed, let your little ones also go with you."

- On the face of it this also looks reasonable. Property in Egypt is more productive than property in the wilderness. The flocks and herds will depreciate in value when they are driven to a land which furnishes no ready market. Not only so, but some will no doubt die on the way.
- 2. But there are property investments which Christians cannot make, profitable though they may be:

And—a nation cannot go into the wilderness to sacrifice unto Jehovah unless the flocks and herds—the animals to be sacrificed—are taken along with the people.

No people can worship God unless they worship with their means as well as with their lips. Moses was eternally right in his response: "Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not a hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord, our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come hither."

3. In all of our churches we see individuals succumbing to this temptation — to give God a lip service, and leaving their property in modern Egypt! Stewardship is still the acid test of one's real religion, and many fail to stand the test.

Moses stood for a wholehearted response to the call of God; so must we. Go entirely out of the land. Go all the way. Make religion felt in the lives of the little ones, and consecrate all of our property to the Christ.

WITNESSING A VITAL PART OF THE GOSPEL PLAN

Scripture: Luke 24:13-49.

Text: Luke 24:44-49.

These Verses present the Old Testament Witness to the New Testament Plan of Salvation. Jesus knew the Old Testament and explained it to His disciples. He calls their attention to five great truths plainly taught in the Word of God.

- 1. The Messiah who comes will suffer. Isaiah 53.
- 2. The Saviour shall rise from the dead. Psalm 16:10.
- 3. The Jews were to bless the whole world. Repentance and remission of sin are to be preached among all nations. Isaiah 49:6.
- 4. The disciples are to bear witness to Christ.
- 5. The Holy Spirit is to come upon them as they go about this work.

Surely witnessing is therefore a vital part of the Gospel plan. The life of every Christian should bear witness to the reality of Christianity.

 This truth is not being acted upon by the average church member. In America within the past 25 years only seven per cent of the church reproduce themselves, and three per cent of these are children; in some of the mission land the proportion has been for certain years we above fifty per cent. The converts in Kore and Africa have caught the spirit of Chris better than we have.

- 2. The business of the whole church is to give th whole gospel to the whole world.
- 3. To be a witness for Christ, we must have message from Him. Our vision of Christ mus reveal to us our need of a Saviour, and th need of our friends for this Saviour. When w have made Him our Saviour, we take Him others. Every true witness must be consistent When we are unloving in our daily lives, we can not recommend a loving Saviour to others.
- 4. Witnessing is the climax of our Christian ex perience. It is the fourth step in our appropria tion of the Christian faith:
 - a. Admit Christ to our heart.
 - b. Submit to Him wholeheartedly.
 - c. Commit all our burdens to Him.
- d. Transmit the story of His salvation to others Why should witnessing be a vital part of ou religion?
- 1. Because Jesus commands it. It is the last command He gave on Olivet before His ascension
- Because witnessing makes known the plan of salvation to the unsaved. Saved men and no angels are intrusted with the work of evangelization.
- Because our witnessing for Christ brings glor to God. Our God knows those who belong to Him, and He will not forget those who strive to bring others to Him.

WHEN CHRISTMAS COMES The Rev. Joseph Fort Newton, D.D.

"He took a little Child, and set Him in the mids of them." Mark 9:36.

What is Christmas, if it be not a prophecy of a time toward which both faith and wisdom point. For one brief day, so swift to go, another spiri broods over us, healing our broken hearts and jarring wills. Strife, anger and vanity fall away while we live in a gentler world where love is law If it might abide long with us it would be well with our humanity and pity and joy would walk the common ways of life, but the day is gone while the welcome is still on our lips.

Beside the story of Christmas, every romance in the world is tedious and tame. The perfect ar of the story fits the perfect poetry of the fact. I must be true for no one would have imagined it It is unthinkable, say the wise. God is not truly great unless He can reveal Himself in little, humble things. If He is too high to be lowly, He is too smal to be God. Love is always lost in immensities. It comes in simple, gentle ways. That is why, or

Christmas, religion is so homely and full of caresses. Hence the joy that sets the world singing. God did not come a giant to little folk. He took our tiny shape and let us hold Him in our arms.

If there be no Christmas our idea of God must be august and awful; it could never be happy and homey. A god who revealed himself only in suns and systems would remain remote; he could never be intimately near. Such words as eternity and infinity chill our spirits and make our minds reel. They tell of a god who sits in silence on far away hills of wonder, dim and unapproachable, a dweller in the distance. But Christmas reveals a little God, joyous and gentle, at once eternal and humble, nestling in the heart.

The story reads like a leaf out of a fairy-book. We must remember that only the thinnest of veils divides fairyland from the truth. That veil may be as thick as a stone wall unless we have kept something easily lost in the rough ways of the world. Aye, happy is the man deep down in whose heart the gay laugh of a child—free, trustful, joyous, makes his grim, grey philosophy foolish. It is to a hidden child in us, sleeping but never dead, that the story makes its appeal, and that is why, when clouds are thrown off our souls and we are truly ourselves, free from the pose of being wise, we know that it is true, this Story of Christmas. The highest truths are never known by logic, but by love.

In a true sense, the urge into childhood, as it is called, is not backward but forward, not a return into an old, but a growth and unfolding into a new childhood. As sense told us, himself, unless we become, not little children, but as little children, we shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of Heaven. After all, children, as someone has said, are rather symbols of youth than youth itself. They are unconsciously young. If we be truly wise, we have the power of converting the symbol into reality and of being young and knowing it.

If the words of Jesus mean anything, they mean that if we are losing — or rather if we have failed to attain the spirit of the child, we are losing the Gospel or can never find it: losing it utterly and need to be born again if we are to regain or find it.

Can the sophisticated modern mind, so wise in its own estimate, so mature in its own judgment and so emancipated, ever enter into the simplicity, the humility, the wonder, and sweet wisdom of the Jesus way of thinking? Most of the elements in its make-up run exactly counter to His faith and the spirit of His life. If the wise and witty mind of our day, so bewildering, intelligent and capable, will not bow at the Manger like the Magi of old, what has it to offer? Surely it dare not give up the quest and resign itself to the religion of despair, lest its own wisdom be impeached as the ultimate folly, ending in obfuscation. It is only fair to ask that it set to work to discover a meaning in life or to invent a meaning for it, else we all fall together into a hound's ditch.

For many of us, something in the spirit of Christmas makes it plain that the cocksure sophistication of our day is pathetically superficial, its glittering cleverness profoundly stupid and its towering pride tragically pitiful. As one listens again to the old, immortal story, and sings again carols that echo down the ages, the scene which some may think is only a fairy-dream which we have agreed to dream for a day and then forget, seems nearer to the truth than all our dim philosophies, if only because it does not seek too high for what is near by. After all, perhaps the most awful error of our smart and giddy-paced age is that we have mistaken knowledge for truth and cleverness for wisdom and have forgotten to distinguish between childish things which St. Paul said should be put aside and the great childlike things which abide and to which we owe the strength and sanity of life.— From the Christian World Pulpit.

The Church Year — December

THE REV. WILLIAM TAIT PATERSON, D.D.

THE NEVER OUT-DATED MESSAGE

Morning, December 4, (Second Sunday in Advent) Gospel for the Day: Luke 21:25-36.

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words never."— Luke $21:33\ (Moffatt)$.

"A word in due season, how good it is!" But a word that is always in season, never out-dated, how wonderful it is! A word for the discouraged in life and a word for the overly-confident; a word for him lacking in enthusiasm and a word for the over-zealous; no matter what our condition or need a word that meets it, how good, how very good such a word is.

The words of Christ are such words, full of hope and strength and encouragement, warning of danger and difficulty yet offering guidance, lifebringing in every age to every man.

His words are always brief and to the point, never over-loaded. The sayings of Christ are to be found, almost all of them, within the short compass of the Gospels. The Sermon on the Mount may be read aloud in less than fifteen minutes. But how many thousands of volumes there are the world can afford to lose rather than these four brief narratives.

His words are never exhausted, never barren

of meaning and message. In every generation since Calvary expositors have delved into them, turned them over, looked at them from every angle, till one would think every phase of thought, every shade of meaning, had been made clear. Yet every generation finds a new emphasis, a word bearing on its peculiar problems and needs. Every hungry heart finds its sustenance, every weary soul its desired rest in Him.

His words are ever spirit and life. (John 6:63.) "They are mystic incarnations of Himself. They carry the divine essence. They are the expressions of vital secrets. They come to the doors of our minds as living presences, instinct with the very life of God. His words are live."— Jowett.

Surely then he who reads these words of Christ should do so carefully and prayerfully. To come to a full measure of understanding he will not be content with the reading. He will seek to live the words. More knowledge of the words of our Lord will be gained by a single effort to live one of His commandments than by a year of reading with no effort to keep His word.

And how our testimony should burn and glow with the deep meaning and the high exaltation of our Master's words. "A great critic has recently said of Mr. John Masefield that his phrases carry no cargoes of wonder. I do not know what may be the value of this criticism; but I do know that no one ought to be able to say it with truth about any ambassador of our Lord. Imagine a man speaking about the unsearchable riches of Christ, and using words which carry no cargoes of wonder! Every time we speak of the Lord our words should be laden with cargoes of wonder, and so they will be I we are in central and vital fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Then shall it be said of us that our words are spirit and they are life."— Jowett.

DOUBTINGS IN PRISON

Morning, December 11 (Third Sunday in Advent) Gospel for the Day: Matthew 11:2-10.

"Now when John heard in the prison the works of the Christ, he sent by his disciples and said unto Him, art Thou He that cometh, or look we for another?"— Matthew 11:2-3.

It was not alone John's body that was in prison, but his mind, his soul. The prison mood had gripped him. The imprisoned mind will always doubt. The imprisoned soul will always fear. John in prison only heard of Jesus and so he questioned. His own program of kingdom-bringing had been different. Smoking out vermin, flaying opposition, driving home sins of doubters and waverers and traitors, that was John's way. Action, always action! And action only could he understand.

And Jesus went eating and drinking, a dinnerguest of high and low, equally dubious. He had a kindly word for the Roman conqueror, even a word of praise for the Jewish law-keeper. Where was His fiail, the threshing instruments of iron? John in prison felt the doubtings taking possession of his mind. His faith was wavering. His disciples sought out Jesus asking, "Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another?"

There was no word of reproach from Jesus. John's disciples spent the busy day with Jesus and returned with the word, "Tell John what you hear and see!" Jesus could trust the genuine spiritual insight of John when he was correctly informed. John would understand the kingdom was coming in quietness and unobserved.

We need free minds to appreciate fully Jesus. Our minds are all too frequently bound by the shackles of the past. The mirages of desired goals lead us astray. We are blinded by the present, comfortable or otherwise. We must put all away and walk with Him. We must seek earnestly to understand the Gospel story. Jesus may seem more human. He will be not less God. He will be nearer us. We may reach out and touch His garment. He will be not less powerful to help.

We need free souls to grow with Jesus. There may be a secret bondage of our souls. Jesus will redeem us from it and we shall march with Him. There may be an old guilt ruling us like a tyrant. Jesus will wipe it out and we shall hold our heads high again. There may be an arrogance, a personal pride hampering us. We must crucify it with Christ.

We need the far vision to serve with Jesus. There had been no Calvary had not Jesus seen beyond the cross to "the joy that was set before Him."

"The day is long and the day is hard, We are tired of the march and of keeping

Tired of the sense of a fight to be won,
Of days to live through and of work to be
done.

Tired of ourselves and of being alone: Yet all the while, did we only see, We walk in the Lord's own company; We fight, but 'tis He who nerves our arm; He turns the arrow that else might harm, And out of the storm He brings a calm; And the work that we count so hard to do, He makes it easy, for He works too; And the days that seem long to live are

A bit of His bright eternities; And close to our need His helping is.

— Susan Coolidge.

THE SAVIOUR IGNORED

Morning, December 18 (Fourth Sunday in Advent) Gospel for the Day: John 1:19-28.

"One whom you do not recognize." John 1:26 (Moffatt).

In that questioning group gathered around him John, keen-eyed, saw One Face amidst the sea of faces and proclaimed Him. In curiosity his questioners peered among the crowd. The eyes of some

of them must have fallen on the young Galilean, but they knew Him quickly for a village workman. Jerusalem was full of such as He. Ignoring Him, they looked further and never found what they

sought.

How many there are today who are in search of God and His help and who ignore the Saviour standing beside them. After nearly twenty centuries of history and testimony they ignore Him who "for us men and for our salvation" gave Him-

self freely in Judea and on Calvary.

To know Jesus is to know His mind. "We have the mind of Christ." But it is no miraculous gift, "sudden in a moment." It is given to those who set their minds on Him, who earnestly seek to know the workings of His mind. It is given to those who earnestly seek to bring that mind to bear on their own problems. It is given to those who earnestly seek to meet their neighbors with

His mind in them.

To know Jesus is to know His spirit. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of His." Again it is no sudden, mysterious gift. His spirit comes to us, His spirit possesses us, as day by day we seek to live in His spirit. That spirit may be found among the pages of the New Testament. It may be seen in His attitude toward men and women. We see His gentleness toward the woman caught in adultery. We note His love for the rich young ruler. We watch Him dealing with the bigoted rabbis, with the scheming priests. We stand with Him before His judge and walk with Him to meet His executioners. And as we stand at Calvary gazing up into that dear Face, loving Him, in some measure understanding Him, His spirit comes to us.

To know Jesus is to know His sacrifice. Calvary will never become a reality to us until the need of that redeeming sacrifice is seen as our own personal

need.

"And make me feel it was my sin, As though no other sins there were, That was to Him who bears the world A load that He could scarcely bear."

Alexander Whyte said of John Kelman, his colleague and successor, "Kelman was a man obviously saved by the recurring wonder of Jesus Christ. He found men all around him who were taking Christ for granted, and to whom He meant little. But to Kelman Christ came every morning with a fresh astonishment and every evening with a new amazement." We are saved only "by the recurring wonder of Jesus Christ."

HIS NAME IS "WONDERFUL!"

Morning, December 25 (Christmas)

First Morning Lesson: Isaiah 9:1-8.

"His name shall be called Wonderful." Isaiah 9:6.

Dr. David J. Burrell in a sermon on the prophetic names given to the Babe calls them Bells of Bethlehem." And indeed, across the fields of the ages we hear them, "like bells at evening

His name is "Wonderful!" Among these mighty names given to Him in prophecy the imagination lingers on the first. Wonderful! Undoubtedly it was His mother's first name for Him. Every young mother whispers "Wonderful" in the ear of her first-born and Mary would be no exception.

"The Counsellor? Not yet to Mary comes That word I think, he has such need of her. The Mighty God? Ah, no, how can it, when

He is so small and weak he just can stir His head upon her breast? The Prince of Peace? O, sweet, spent mother, far too great that word!

She only knows the peace that wraps her round Since first that baby cry of his was heard;

The Everlasting Father? That will come Long, long years hence with comfort solemn, deep!

But now she murmurs only, "Little son!" And moves to kiss him softly in his sleep. One word alone of all the prophet spake

Is in her heart tonight, I think - just this -The Wonderful! She says it o'er and o'er, And breathes it yet again in every kiss."

(The British Weekly.)

Wonderful! Is it not so? After nineteen hundred years His hand stretching across the centuries guides mankind toward the light. After all the progress in knowledge it is still the mind of Christ that illumines the best and clearest thinking on human life and its perplexities. Amid all our relief measures we feel the beating of the heart of Jesus. Wonderful!

Dr. Rittelmeyer has told us that before he wrote his book, "Behold the Man," he gave twenty years to the study of Christ and the work He has done. He studied first His strongest opponents, such as Nietzsche; then His great rivals, such as Buddha; then His great followers, such as St. Francis, Meister Eckhart, and Tolstoi. He comes from twenty years of such study to say to us, "Freely and royally we may take from Him what we can and receive from Him yet today, as we can obtain them from no other source, renewal of life for ourselves, fulfillment of our ideals for our world and ultimate union with God." Wonderful!

"The Increase of His Government." It is not enough that we grow sentimental about Jesus. Much of our Christmas rejoicing is only that. The seventh verse should keep us in touch with reality. He is Governor. He must rule. He demands the

first place in our hearts.

"Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem

be born,

If He's not born in thee, thy soul is still forlorn;

The cross on Golgotha will never save thy soul,

The cross in thine own heart alone can make thee whole."



Expositions

PROFESSOR A. T. ROBERTSON, Ph. D.

Answers to Questions

Dear Sir:

I am not a trained Bible student, but I think that I have found the correct interpretation of certain visions of the prophets pertaining to those things which will come to pass just before the millennium. It is my conviction that the "beasts" or living creatures seen by Ezekiel, Joel, Daniel, and St. John, were the various inventions of men to appear immediately before Christ's second coming, such as the modern locomotives, street cars, automobiles, motorcycles, etc., all of which have materialized in the last few years.

In Ezekiel 1st and 10th chapters and in Revelation 4th and 5th chapters I claim there is a description of a modern street car; in Joel 2, Daniel 8, and Revelation 9, a locomotive and train; in Revelation 9:13-21, modern firearms; in Revelation 12:3, and 4, a passenger train; in Revelation 13:2-10, an automobile; in Revelation 13:11-18, a motorcycle. Also Daniel 7 briefly describes some of these.

I would like for a trained Bible student who could better read the original language than myself to make a study of these passages as I believe that he would find that at least some of them refer to the various modern inventions which have mysteriously appeared in this age. However, they all may refer to the pope as many of the older commentators seem to think.

I received this inquiry in 1913, from Burnett's Creek, Indiana, under date of April 13, 1913. I do not give the writer's name, as he did not then ask me to answer his query in *The*

Expositor. But I had kept his letter and came across it the other day. I answered him at the time, but it occurred to me that this brother's perplexity may serve a good purpose for the readers of *The Expositor*. In recent months it has fallen to my lot in writing Volume VI of my Word Pictures in the New Testament to read a great many books on the Apocalypse of John. Many of them contain interpretations of the signs and symbols in the Revelation as whimsical, crass. and quixotic as the view advanced by the brother from Burnett's Creek. Indiana, though presented by learned scholars and printed in expensive books. Able men have sought to identify the horses, the scorpions, the locusts with various individuals and events through the ages. Dates have been set repeatedly for the second coming of Christ in spite of his emphatic and positive statement that no one knew the day nor the hour. In the recent World War some prominent men definitely announced the end of the world with the battle of Armageddon already begun. I have used the letter of the brother from Burnett's Creek for the sole pupose of showing how perilous a path we tread when in a book of apocalyptic symbolism we insist on minute literalism in every detail in the picture. Dr. W. H. Whitsitt, long Professor of Church History in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, a man of great genius and quaintness of style, used to illustrate the peril of literalism by a sect that would not pray to God except from a hole in the ground because the Psalmist once said: "Out of the depths have I cried

unto thee" (Psalm 130:1). And yet the literal interpretation is to be preferred as a rule, provided it is in harmony with the context and purpose of the passage. All language is at bottom pictographic, but the picture often fades away and leaves room for other ideas. No book in the Bible has suffered so much from strange and bizarre interpretations as the Apocalypse of John. Old Dr. South used to say that the Revelation of John either found one crazy or left him so. That is, of course, a gross overstatement. And yet the book does attract people of unbalanced minds and probably

has rendered some more so. But children love to hear the Revelation read aloud. They see the pictures and do not try to interpret the various animals described. Certainly the book was written for the consolation of the persecuted Christians in the reign of Domitian and it undoubtedly did cheer many who became martyrs for Jesus Christ. The message of the Apocalypse of John carries the same note of courage to us today. This is far more important for us all than trying to figure out times and seasons which are quite beyond our knowledge.

The Paradox of Life—Psalm 39 THE REV. PAUL HOERLEIN ROTH

I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue:

I will keep my mouth with a

bridle,

While the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence,

I held my peace, even from good; And my sorrow was stirred.

My heart was hot within me, While I was musing the fire burned:

Then spake I with my tongue.

Lord, make me to know mine end.

And the measure of my days, what it is:

That I may know how frail I

Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth;

And mine age is as nothing before thee:

Verily every man at his best estate is altogether vanity.

Surely every man walketh in a vain show:

Surely they are disquieted in

He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee.

Deliver me from all my transgressions:

Make me not the reproach of the foolish.

I was dumb, I opened not my mouth;

Because thou didst it.

Remove thy stroke away from

I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.

When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity,

Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth:
Surely every man is vanity.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, And give ear unto my cry; Hold not thy peace at my tears: For I am a stranger with thee, And a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

O spare me that I may recover strength,

Before I go hence, and be no more.

Deep is the mystery of life. We live, yet we do not live. With all the plant and animal creation we share the miracle of vitality. But this life wastes away and ends in death. No sooner do we live than we begin to die. In the deep movements of building up and tearing down that constitute the processes of life, the latter always wins.

To man alone of all that lives is it given to be conscious of the contradiction that living is dying, that life and death are bound indissolubly together. Man alone is not content with the mere living that means progressive extinction. He craves life that is life indeed. He craves it with an inappeasable longing. He dimly envisions it and reaches up groping hands toward it. The merely natural life is an intolerable burden to the serious mind, a hopeless ordeal without issue. And the more deeply one lives the more keenly is felt the pang of life's futility.

Verses 1-3. This is the quandry that racks the writer of this poignant psalm. About him lies a world content to live upon the lower level. He strives to keep the faith. He is mocked and taunted by prosperous ungodliness. He resolves to endure silently the trial of the hostile environment. He will not sin with his

tongue. He will not dishonor God, or discredit his profession by unmanly complaints. He will try to turn his mind away from "good," that is, from the apparent happiness of the worldling, and he will try to silence his sense of contradiction between it and the righteousness of God.

But the test is severe. It is hard to be in the world and not of it. His heart was "hot within him," while he "mused, the fire burned." He had, at length, to speak. What he said we do not know. What we do know is that he turned to God Himself for the strength to believe and to endure.

Verses 4-6. The course he takes at first seems strange, for he prays God to make clear to him the transitoriness of human life; "Oh, that I may know how frail I am!" God has made man's days a few "handbreadths," the duration of a life is as "nothing" before the Eternal One. "At his best state," that is, no matter how firmly he stands, man is nothingness before God. He is a "shadow" moving about, a wraith without substance. His activity is *hevel*, breathlike, empty, vain. And the result of it is that he knows not who will snatch away the things he has heaped up.

Verses 7-11. The thought moves on. Weattah, "And now." life being as it is, "And now, Lord, what do I wait for?" The answer, which he gives himself, is, "My hope is in thee." Jehovah alone gives basis for hope. He alone justifies waiting.

It seemed strange that comfort should be sought in the knowledge of human frailness and shortness of life. But here we have the explanation. The Old Testament believer, meagerly provided as he was with clear teaching on the nature and extent of eternal life, had yet such faith that he could look straight to Jehovah, whose very name means the Living One, and could recognize Him through all the mist of this death-like, empty existence as the Source and Ground of life that is life indeed. Thus he could answer man's weary question, "And now, Lord, what do I wait for?" with the faith-born reply, "My hope is in thee!" Here is the distinctive nobility of the Old Testament faith, that having not seen it yet can believe. But is not our religion after all the refuge and home only of those who are fully conscious of their own frailty and helplessness and find their whole hope in God?

But there is a cause for the psalmist's sufferings, and it is this that must be removed before help can come. That cause is sin. Believer he may be, and in faith far exalted above the worldlings who scoff at him. Even so, his own sin abundantly explains the sufferings he endures. It is sin that must be removed. Therefore he prays, "Deliver me from all my transgressions!" Uproot sin from my heart, that the guilt and misery that go with it may fall away. There is also a second basis to this prayer. The first basis is mercy to himself, the second is the honor of God, which would be attacked through the derision of the unbeliever.

As to the rest he will be silent. "I am dumb, I open not my mouth." The reason for this silence is different from that given in verses 2, 3, but consistent with it. There he was

silent under tribulation that the ungodly might not find occasion in his conduct to reproach his God. Here he is silent for an additional reason. He suffers, but "Thou hast done it." It is the hand of God. His woes are the punishment of his sin. It is not for him to complain; rather should he make confession and implore forgiveness.

And he does beseech God for mercy. The judgment is just, but will not the Almighty temper it with mercy. The stroke of God is too severe for his feebleness. He can bear little more. He is near the end of his strength. The wholesome correction that leads to repentance may go to the length of destruction in death. His nature is falling apart like a garment eaten by moths. Man, sinful, mortal, becomes "vanity," a mere nothing.

Verses 13, 14. Follows one last prayer based on the brevity of earthly life. Man is a stranger, a passing guest in a foreign country. May God look favorably upon him that he "shine forth," that is, find peace and cheer, before he goes hence and is no more.

This Psalmist is wrestling with Job's problem. But Job knew in the end that suffering and love could go together, and that suffering serves high ends in God's plan. This Psalmist had not got so far, nor had he the clear comfort of a glorious immortality. But what a faith he had! And what an insight into the paradox of life!

Methods of Church Work

A MONTH OF "INNINGS"

The Rev. William McKinley Walker reports plans for a month of Innings for the various groups of his congregation, climaxed by an "Inning" for

Christ during the last week of December.

The first week in December will be observed as "innings" for the Sunday school, and there will be plans for some activity each afternoon or evening. The Sunday school will occupy assigned seats at the Sunday service, and the sermon will deal directly with the responsibility of the church to the home and the child.

The second week will be observed as "innings" for the men of the church, and the women of the church. Saturday evening will be set aside for a church supper, and addresses on the work of the men, and the work of the women, in the general program of the church. Sunday morning service will be devoted to the men's groups, when organizations will attend; the Sunday evening service will be devoted to the women's work, the sermon dealing particularly with the attitude of the church toward women.

The third week will be observed as "innings" for the young people. Many of the young people are attending schools in other cities or states. and there will be displays and banners calling attention to the interests of the young people. There will be meetings and community activities every evening during the week, climaxed by a church supper on Saturday evening. Music will be furnished by the Sunday school orchestra, and addresses will be by members of the group.

The fourth week will be observed as "innings" for Christ. There will be an open forum for discussions on "What I Believe!" and plans for Christmas will be carried forward during the week. The sermon for Christmas Sunday will attempt to explain some of the doctrines of the Christian faith which the discussions during the week have shown to be misunderstood.

This is a comprehensive plan, and should bring results. Why not try it this year in your church?

HYMNS OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Several church bulletins have recently come to The Expositor wherein are paragraphs explaining the history and original setting of the hymns selected for the specific Sunday service. Hymns are selected to support the theme of the sermon for the day, and are an important part of the worship program. Worshippers will understand that portion of the service better, if they know the meaning and origin of the hymn. There are many books available at a moderate price which will be of help to you in writing short explanatory paragraphs about the hymns you select.

THOSE CALLED TO HIGHER SERVICE

Many churches will have a special Communion Service during the month of December, which is an appropriate time to plan a portion of the service as a special Memorial to those who have been called to Higher Service during the past year. If you plan several weeks in advance and notify the families whose loved ones will be remembered in the Memorial Service, they will gladly supply flowers, and some will supply other Memorial gifts. It is well to print the names of the departed in the Church Bulletin in your announcement of the service.

EVERY MEMBER BRING A MEMBER

The Rev. Edwin I. Stearns, First Presbyterian Church, Caldwell, New Jersey, has government postal cards printed and distributed by the ushers. Members of the congregation address the cards to persons in the community who should attend the services or functions mentioned on the cards. This method is probably more effective than an invitation from the pastor would be. Here are two of the cards:

Card No. 1

First Presbyterian Church, Caldwell, N. J. Edwin I. Stearns, Pastor

EXPRESSIONAL YOUTH

Graciously responding to many requests, our young people will on Sunday evening, January 12, 193, for the fifth and last time, enact the Bible Drama

"At the Gate Beautiful"

Our Christian Endeavorers in entire charge of the service. The offering will go to the C.E. Parish House pledge. (If you cannot be present, Farnon Prescott, 348 Bloomfield Avenue, is Treasurer, and will acknowledge your gift.)

This is a personal invitation from

Card No. 2

First Presbyterian Church, Caldwell, N. J. Edwin I. Stearns, Pastor

You are bidden

The Christmas Candle-light Service LEST

Director Francis Maintains Previous High Standards

Last year those who arrived late -WE Well, you understand: we cannot

Make Reservations. Seven Forty-five

FORGET Sunday Evening, December Twenty-second.

You have been personally remembered by

A CHRISTMAS GREETING

The pastor of one of the large metropolitan churches usually reserves space in the weekly bulletin for a synopsis of his sermon. In his Christmas bulletin he printed this announcement:

"This week I have only one thought to leave

with you, and the space here would permit me to say it 75 times. I will say it once in large letters:

"God bless you and keep you. May His grace so fill your hearts with love for Him and for your fellowmen that you will have no time nor strength for thought of self."

A GIFT SUGGESTION

Marcus L. Bach writes, "There is no more acceptable gift in many instances than a year's subscription to a loved magazine. I believe that many ministers will give *The Expositor* to some fellow preacher this coming season of Christmas. Perhaps some ministers' wives would include a subscription in their gifts to 'friend husband' this Christmastide. I suggest that you supply a card, that may be signed and handed or mailed to a friend, which reads something like this:

The Expositor will come to you each month until next Christmas to make your ministry happier, holier, and more hopeful

Such cards will be available to any minister who desires one, and the special offers available now will make your gift doubly attractive both to you and the one who receives the gift.

A WHITE GIFTS SERVICE

At the First Evangelical Church, Elkhart, Indiana, the young people presented the pageant, "The Sign of God," at the White Gifts Service. The characters in the pageant require a wholesome number of church members which creates general interest. This year donations of all sorts and descriptions should be included in the white gifts service, because there is need for every gift, and there are many whose ability to give is limited. The gifts can all be wrapped in white.

WOOSTER AVENUE REFORMED CHURCH, AKRON, OHIO, HAS WHITE GIFTS SERVICE

The following announcement was printed in the Church Bulletin, and may help you to plan your service:

WHITE GIFTS FOR THE KING
Unique Christmas Service Being Planned for
Sunday Morning Preceding Christmas

A Christmas Service in Which Everybody Has a Part

On a white covered platform and at the foot of a white covered Cross which will stand in the center of the platform, there you will lay your gift for the Christchild at our "White Gifts for the King" Christmas Service, Sunday morning, December 21st.

We think it will be the best Christmas service we have ever held in this church. In the first place, the price of admission will be a gift for the King. It need not be a large gift, unless you have both the means and a large heart filled with sorrow and sympathy for the suffering people all around us. But large or small, whether its value is measured

in pennies or in dollars, it should be one of such nature that it can be used to feed the hungry or clothe the needy of our community. In the case of very small children it might well mean a toy. Do you know that there will be thousands of little tots in Akron this Christmas who will get no toys unless we and others like us play Santa Claus for them. The rest of us should bring clothes or foodstuffs or money. Each class will be asked to collect its own gifts and bring them to the Cross as a class gift. As each class brings its gift, the class will be asked to contribute something to the program and we hope every class is already planning its contribution. You will each have three or four minutes; but in that time we will expect you to give something worth going across the city to see. Of course to do this properly, in such manner that your number brings a real contribution to the Christmas Spirit of the service, you will need to begin at once to utilize both the imagination, ingenuity and brains of the class.

Gifts from others than members of the Sunday school will be collected at the door by a special committee. The program will be a unified Sunday school and Morning Worship Service, beginning perhaps at 9:00 or 9:30 o'clock, the exact time to be announced later.

The committees are already appointed for the carrying out of this program.

If you are in doubt about your part in the program or are in need of suggestions as to how to do your part it might be of value to you to consult either Miss Shriber or Mr. Zechiel.

If you know of people needing our help communicate with the Distribution Committee chair-

THE LIFE OF CHRIST IN STORY AND SONG

This program was presented at the Chicago Heights Lutheran Church, J. Bannen Swope, Pastor:

Organ Prelude.
Song by the Congregation.
Scripture Reading — John 1:1-17.
Prayer.
Introduction.
The Angel and the Shepherd.
Hark, the Herald Angels Sing (Organ).
Christ's Early Life.
Fisher's of Men.
Christ's Earthly Ministry.
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say.
Jesus and the Children.
His Agony in Gethsemane.

His Agony in Gethsemane Christ Before Pilate. The Crucifixion.

The Burial.

The Resurrection. Christ Arose.

His Welcome in Glory. The Heavenly Vision (Organ).

Christ's Heavenly Reign.

He is Coming Again. Short Address. Offertory and Offering. Benediction.

AN APPROPRIATE GREETING

Rev. W. W. Holmes, Pastor of First M.E. Church, Alexandria, La., had a cut made of the portion of a page in the Bible, Luke 2:7-17, which was used on the inside page of a four-page folder. The cover carries this title:

The Real Christmas Story written nineteen hundred years ago.

This title is arranged in three lines by the printer, and the other wording is in small letters, italics, three lines. This is one way of assuring the reading of the sweetest of all stories.



Dr. Albert W. Beaven, president of Colgate-Rochester Theological Seminary, tells in the brochure which he has written for the American Bible Society in anticipation of Universal Bible Sunday, how certain Biblical characters met the exigencies and reverses of life. Scripture heroes and heroines stood, up to life with a joyous hopefulness presaging a triumphant victory rather than a grimly achieved conquest. Dr. Beaven reviews the course of this attitude in a number of outstanding Biblical characters notably in Jesus and St. Paul from whose phrase "rejoicing in hope" the theme of the brochure and of Universal Bible Sunday has been taken.

"This age needs a new inoculation of the Bible," writes Dr. Beaven, "It is the tonic we need when

our hope 'blood-count' is low. If we could take into our systems more of its good cheer, its poise, its courage, its quiet confidence in the long processes of life, it would act for us as the keel does for the ship, it would hold us steady in the time of storm, and keep us from bobbing aimlessly around. May it not be true that one of the causes that have brought about our contemporary feeling of panicky fear is the lack of appreciation of the things for which the Bible stands? As ministers, coming before our people week by week, with the opportunity of recommending resources which they need and can secure, let no one of us underestimate the privilege that is ours in introducing people to the values which the Bible holds.

"'Rejoicing in hope' was no pious platitude on the lips of Paul; it was no shallow bit of optimism; it was no Pollyanna song. It was a profound conviction growing out of experience, out in life, where men grapple with the hardest situations which can be presented to them. Paul had come to his struggle, and come out of it, not only rejoicing in hope himself, but able to say to those to whom he wrote, 'I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Dr. Beaven asserts that the mere possession of a Bible in a home will not automatically bless that home. Out of the rich experience of twenty years as the pastor of the Lake Avenue Baptist Church, of Rochester, he makes suggestions to pastors as to how Bible reading may be stimulated among church members and especially in family life. He concludes his brochure with an appeal to every minister "to look upon Universal Bible Sunday as a time when he can stress the importance for our day of a wider consumption of the beautiful literature which the Bible holds, of a broader familiarity with the personalities to whom it introduces us; and above all, of a deeper realization of how tragically necessary it is for us that we catch again the point of view of our Lord and Master and weave it into our lives." He suggests "that each minister look upon his parish and his congregation as constituting a laboratory, in which he can carry on the experiment of finding how he can best instill into the lives of his people the habit of regularly reading the old Book and of practicing its precepts. While others are searching the stars, perusing sociology, studying economics to find the solution of our problems, we may, as ministers," he adds, "strike a mine from which we can dig the gold for which all hunt."

Universal Bible Sunday promoted annually by the American Bible Society and to be observed this year on Sunday, December 4, is growing in favor with the churches of America as a day for emphasis upon the importance and value of the Scriptures. In a time of wide-spread depression when serious emergencies must be faced and when

new sources of strength are being sought a renewal of Bible study occasioned by the observance of Universal Bible Sunday is bound to result in the development of rich spiritual resources with which the Christian can exultantly stand up to life.

THE BIBLE - THERE IT STANDS

Century follows century — There it stands! Empires rise and fall and are forgotten — There it stands!

Kings are crowned and uncrowned — There it stands!

Despised and torn to pieces — There it stands!
Atheists rail against it — There it stands!
Agnostics smile cynically — There it stands!
Unbelief abandons it — There it stands!

Higher critics deny its claim to inspiration — There it stands!

Youth calls for a beacon — There it stands!

Sorrow cries for consolation — There it stands!

Weakness searches for source of power — There

it stands!

Old age calls for an upholding staff — There it

The hungry soul cries for bread — There it stands!

Do the lost seek salvation? — There it stands! — A. Z. Conrad.

One of the three known surviving copies of the Gutenberg Bible will become the property of the United States Government. The House of Representatives has passed a bill authorizing the purchase of the Vollbehr collection of 3,000 books, all printed before the year 1500. The expenditure for the library will be one million and a half dollars.

A generation ago, Robert G. Ingersoll predicted the speedy downfall of the Christian Church and said that the Bible would soon be an unused book. During the last calendar year, the Christian people of this country contributed \$1,500,000,000 to the Church and its allied interests. During the same period, 36,500,000 copies of the Bible were sold.

Music for Choir and Organ for December

Prelude

A Shepherd's Tale — Gilette
Fountain Reverie — Fletcher
Meditation — Shand
Pastorale — Galbraith
The Shepherd's Song — Guilmant
Dawn — Chubb
Morning — Grieg
Prayer — Capocci

Anthem

Shadows of Night — Matthews
O Love That Will Not Let Me Go — Brackett
Rejoice in the Lord O Ye Righteous — Schnecker
Sanctus — Gounod
I Will Magnify Thee — Rogers
Saviour Again to Thy Dear Name — Chadwick
O God, Who Hast Prepared — Gaul

Far From the World — Parker O Beautiful Jesu — Stainer

Offertory

Te Deum — West
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say — Meyer
God So Loved the World — Stainer
Just as I Am — Neidlinger
I Will Lay Me Down in Perfect Peace — Buck
A Christmas Idyll — Dunn
Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem — Clare

Postlude
Alla Marcia — Rebikoff
Festival March — Carroll
Toccata in B Minor — Batiste
Postlude — Mendelssohn
Processional March — Smith
Song of Gladness — Sibley

Hallelujah Chorus (Messiah) — Handel

The Town and Country Church

Benevolences

A true church is a missionary agency and every member a life member. Jesus said:

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

After he was risen from the dead, Jesus spoke to the early church, saying:

by THE REV. HENRY W. McLAUGHLIN, D.D.

Director of Country Church Department, Presbuterian Church in U.S.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Any church which lives just for itself is doomed to die. Many small churches, however, have had such a difficult time raising money enough to support themselves that they have considered it impossible to give anything for others.

In the November issue we discussed "Church Attendance," and incidentally told how Rev.

Frank Foster, of the Rich Valley pastorate, had solved the financial problems of his churches.

Rev. Silas Bain has been troubled because his people gave nothing to missions. He discussed the matter with his officers. After a conference in which all took part in the discussion, it was decided to appoint a committee to gather as much information as possible on methods of financing the missionary budget. Letters were written to a number of agencies seeking for information? One was sent to the Farmers' Federation, Asheville, N. C. This is a farmers' organization operated on Christian principles and fostering among other things the Lord's Acre Plan in the country churches. Rev. Dumont Clarke, who has this part of the work in charge, sent a copy of the Farmers' Federation News, which gave a number of helpful suggestions.

Another letter was sent to the Southern Methodist Sunday School Board, 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tennessee, and from this Board there was received a little booklet entitled "Working With God in Building the Country Church."

In answer to a letter addressed to *The Expositor*, a sample copy of the Pay in Kind receipt book was received. Much helpful information was also secured from other sources and agencies.

After carefully reading all of the information obtained, the committee recommended that a plan be adopted in which every member of the congregation should undertake some definite project for missions.

Some agreed to work a plot of ground, others set aside a cow, others a pen of hens, a calf, a sheep, a pig, etc. The Farmers' Cooperative Organization agreed to sell all the products and pay what they brought to the missionary treasurer of the church. The first Tuesday of each month was set aside as "Ingathering Day." One of the members who has a truck agreed to dedicate it as his project and received for its services Pay in Kind receipts. This truck was sent to each home in the congregation to gather whatever the people had to donate for missions. If some had only a dozen eggs or a pound of butter, these were accepted and the donor paid in receipts. These receipts were used in the missionary end of the envelopes.

The first ingathering was made on the first Tuesday in April. It was rather disappointing as at that time of year, outside of poultry and eggs, the people had little to give. Only \$10.20 was received from the first ingathering. If it had been necessary to pay for the truck in cash it would have been discouraging indeed. But the ingathering has continued during each month since, and the receipts have gradually increased until on the first Tuesday in October the produce brought \$124.90.

One man had dedicated a calf which he allowed to run with the cow. It weighed four hundred pounds and brought 5½c, which amounted to \$22.00. Another man dedicated a pig, to which he

gave good care. It weighed a little over two hundred pounds and brought \$7.00.

As Christmas comes in December, and during this month the people are making a special offering to celebrate the glad season which commemorates the birth of Jesus, the Saviour and Lord, it is expected that the ingathering will be unusually large, as the people will be thinking about the Babe of Bethlehem and all that God's Great Gift has meant to a needy and lost world, and to their own lives.

The congregations in the pastorate agreed to set their missionary budget at \$600 a year. During the seven months in which they have had the ingathering practice, the receipts have amounted to more than \$400. So it is safe to predict that when the end of the year of experimentation comes on the 31st day of March, the gifts of this pastorate to benevolences will amount to considerably more than the \$600 which the congregation set as their goal.

Giving should be made a definite part of our worship. It was impossible for the people to bring calves, pigs, etc., into the church as gifts, but by using the Pay in Kind receipts and the double-end envelopes they have been enabled to make a contribution every Sunday, and quite a number of the members of the congregation have attained to the monthly Stewardship Honor Roll which was described in the November issue of *The Expositor*. The receipts were given in the same amounts as the weekly subscription.

If there is no farm agency through which the products gathered for benevolences can be sold at an advantage, some local merchant who is a member of the church may be enlisted. One country church has an officer who is a merchant, who buys anything the people have to donate to the church, and pays for the contribution in Pay in Kind receipts. The products are sold and the money received is turned over to the church treasurer.

Some merchants send truck loads of produce two or three times a week to near-by cities. The goods may be handled through such a merchant by securing his cooperation.

The officers of the church should insist upon produce of good and salable quality. The products should be graded and only the highest ethical methods adopted in their sale. A patronage can be built for farm products if graded articles are offered and guaranteed to be of the exact quality represented.

Attractions of the Rural Pastorate By THE REV. MARTIN SCHROEDER, D.D. Bloomfield, Nebraska

VII. THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGE

The number of people living on the farm may have gone back during the last ten years from about 31 million to 30, but the fertility of the soil is still there. Prices may have reached bottom and robbed the farmer of his due, he may be deprived of all he once called his own, but they can not take from him what he is. This condition leads us to acknowledge the fact that the rural pastor can not be satisfied with facing the religious and social problems of his church, but he must be prepared to consider —

7. The Economic Challenge, While one may deny the justice of exaggerating the existence of a rural church problem in the sense as indicated above. there would be no foundation to a denial of a farmer's problem. The danger mark is up. The planless competitive handling of our industries led to that crash in Wall street a few years ago. The same absence of a nation-wide program has brought us close to a sharp decline in the economic status of the producer of our food. Teased with artificial credits he bought, poured the products of his labor and thrift into the coffers of his financial superiors, and today an unusually large number of this industrious folk find themselves being deprived of land and means to continue in their own strength. Aside from maneuverings in the daily press, a stifling silence hovers over the situation. Pride hides the tragedy.

Dr. Ross, of Wisconsin, the eminent sociologist declares, "If it (the agricultural depression) goes on we will have a condition where the more intelligent people will leave the farm because of lack of opportunity there, leaving the less intelligent behind." Love for the soil is not sufficient to keep the modern agricultural pioneer in charge of it. The soil must offer a reasonable prospect of getting

ahead. Through the combination of labor and wise investment he is entitled to a fair return either as renter or owner. If this opportunity is denied him he will seek elsewhere for the application of skill, leaving the soil to loan companies and the tenant with his limited interest. The shadow of the peasant lies across the pathway.

Ages ago a Chinese philosopher said: "The well-being of the people is like a tree; agriculture is its root; manufacture and commerce are its branches and life. If the root is injured the leaves fall, and the tree dies." Are we approaching a catastrophe in American agriculture? If so, is it not up to the churches to challenge an un-ethical system which allows this paralyzing of the nation's spinal cord? The task of the gospel messenger is to put heart into the tiller of the soil engaged in a race with economic fate. A cheap and superficial optimism will not do. Shall it become increasingly true what Edwin Markham has said?

"Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground, The emptiness of ages in his face And on his back the burden of the world."

If you should ever wonder what attraction, what challenge, there is in the life of the rural pastor, then just remember the demands made upon him as preacher, educator, and as pastor. Remember further there are demands of national, social, and economic importance. The challenge is there. God pity the man who thinks nothing goes on in the country.

Church Night

THE REV. SHIRLEY SWETNAM STILL

I. LIFE-CHOICES

The Lord's Prayer: In concert. Song: "Higher Ground."

First Talk: In the matter of education, we make

- life-choices.

 1. We choose to be content or to strive for more
- usefulness.

 2. We decide to sacrifice for an education or to sacrifice the education.
- 3. Every choice of knowledge enriches the whole of subsequent life.

Scripture: Acts 7:22.

Prayer: That none of us may be content with what we know, but that we may all choose to learn and grow.

Song: "Teach Me Thy Will, Oh, Lord."

- The Second Talk: Marriage is a life-choice.

 1. "To marry or not to marry" is a matter of
 - choice.
 2. The kind of mates we choose may make or
 - wreck lives.
 3. The marriage-choice should be made in the light of Christian ideals.

Song: "Love Lifted Me."

Prayer: That husbands and wives may strive to be powers for good in each other's lives. Scripture: Matt. 19:4-7.

The Third Talk: The life-choice for or against Christ.

- 1. This is the choice between sin and righteousness.
- 2. It is the choice between peace and unrest.

3. It is the choice of eternal destiny.

Prayer: That those who have chosen Christ may be true followers, and that those who have not followed Him may enter His service today.

Song: "Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling."
During this song, let the invitation to church
membership be extended.

Reading: "Per Aspera," by Florence Earl Coates:

"Thank God a man can grow!

He is not bound

With earthward gaze to creep along the ground:

Though his beginnings be but poor and low,

Thank God a man can grow!"

Closing Prayer.

Recessional Music: "The Prodigal."

II. LESSONS IN PRAYER

Special Song: "In the Secret of His Presence." Bible Reading: "The first lesson in prayer," Gen.

Prayer: That we may learn to pray.

Song by the Congregation: "The Beautiful Garden of Prayer."

Story of the first intercessory prayer, by a young person who has studied Gen. 18:20-33. Song: "I'm Praying for You."

An intercessory prayer for the sinners, for the

weak, for the sick.

Bible Reading: A lesson on prayer - taught by the great Teacher, Matt. 6:6-9.

The Lord's Prayer: In concert.

Song-Prayer: "Have Thine Own Way, Lord." Talk: Three Prayer-Lessons:

1. Psalm 66:18.

2. "In my name" - John 14:13.

3. "Thy will be done" - Luke 22:42.

Bible Reading: "Prayer as a Power." James 5:16-

Quartette: "The Mercy Seat" or "There is a Place Where Spirits Blend."

Talk: The necessity for regular habits of prayer:

They help us to meet temptation.
 They keep us happy.

3. They make us spiritual. Song: "Sweet Hour of Prayer."

Benediction.

III. CHRISTMAS BELLS

Of course the Christmas decorations will be in evidence at this meeting.

Begin with the well-known reading: "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day."

Song, by the carollers or by the congregation: "The First Noel."

Scripture (without announcement): Luke 2:8-16. Song by Children: "Why Do Bells on Christmas Ring?"

Talks, by three adults, speaking ten minutes each: "The Messages of the Bells." The solos between

the talks are without announcement: 1. The First Message —"Remember."

a. Christmases past.

b. That Christmas has come again.

c. The Christmas story.

The first solo - "Long Ago in Old Judea," one stanza.

2. The Second Message -- "Peace."

a. Peace in the heart.

b. Peace on earth.

c. Goodwill among individuals.

Solo - second stanza only of "Joy to the World."

3. The Third Message—"The Angels' Message."

a. It was a personal message —"to you is born."

b. We should accept Him anew as our Saviour on Christmas.

Solo - last stanza only of "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

Prayer: That we may apply the Christmas messages to our own lives.

Congregational Songs:

"O Come All Ye Faithful."

"Hark, the Herald Angels Sing."

"Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life." "Silent Night."

Benediction.

Recessional Music: "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go."

IV. THE FLIGHT OF TIME

This meeting is suitable for a watch-night service, if it should be called for. Song: "Come Thou Almighty King."

Reading: "Whither?" by Blanche F. Salter, in the

New York Times: Oh, tell me, I pray,

Met you a vagabond going that way?

Had he a scythe? Had he long, hoary beard? Noted you sly, furtive looks as he neared?

I've lost untold treasure - a life's hoarded store -

And none but the vagabond passed by my door. You say he trekked slowly, weighed down by a pack?

Oh, tell me sir, caught you a glimpse in his sack? Saw you there anything glittering, bright?

Anything rosy or silvery white? Greater in value than life's rarest gem,

Dreams, cherished hopes, saw you nothing of them?

Time, the old robber! I know it was he. Call to him! Why does he not wait for me? Can they be lost? Oh, sir, tell me, I pray, Journeys that vagabond no more this way?

Talk: "Time is Flying."

- I. What has gone by?
 - 1. Years.
 - 2. Opportunities.
 - 3. Friends and pleasures.

II. Is it unfair that they are gone?

- 1. We have had the years and used or abused them
- 2. The opportunities have been ours to accept or reject.
- 3. Time has not really stolen from you, but you cannot steal from time.

Song: "While the Days are Going By." Scripture Reading: Psa. 90:1-6 and 9-10.

Song: "I Need Thee Every Hour."

Two stories of pauses in the flight of time, by two story-tellers who have studied Josh. 10:6-14, and 2 Kings 20:1-11.

Song: "Work for the Night is Coming."

Resolutions as to the use of the new year — a period of general participation. Song: "I Would Be Like Jesus."

Benediction.

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Book Reviews

THE REV. I. J. SWANSON, D.D.

Jesus After Nineteen Centuries, by Ernest Fremont Tittle. The 1932 Yale Lectures on Preaching. Abingdon. 217 pp. \$2.00. Dr. Tittle is one of the really great preachers in our country. He is particularly effective in addressing business men and college students. His ministry in the Cathedral M.E. Church, Evanston, Ill., is notable for its prophetic messages and its fearless and sane advocacy of the social Gospel. These lectures on preaching do not deal with the technique, but with the contest of preaching; he "suggests a few ways in which the central ideas of Jesus may be used in modern preaching." He continues. "I am more than ever convinced that for our generation Jesus is, indeed, 'the real and living way.' " He discusses Jesus as the Light for Men; The Humanism of Jesus: The Larger Loyalty: Overcoming Evil: The Necessity of the Cross; Overcoming Fear; Satisfying Man's Hunger for Life and A Creative Faith. He states what in his judgment are the essential teachings of Jesus, and points out their application to the religious needs of today. His discussion of these topics is marked by maturity of thought, keenness of insight, and conviction of their supreme values for our times. Evidences of the author's wide reading and deep thinking are on every page of this book. Its study would be a rewarding experience to ministers. It gives new insight into the message of Jesus and new power to declare it. This volume is equal to the best in the notable series to which it belongs.

The Pastoral Ministry, by Hampton Adams. Cokesbury. 173 pp. \$1.00. The author is pastor of the Christian (Disciples') church, with a membership of over 1000, at Frankfort, Ky. He has been only ten years in the ministry. While he holds preaching in high honor, he regards the pastoral ministry equally indispensable. "Every church," he maintains, "should be served by a physician of the spiritual life." The chapter headings show the breadth of his treatment of the topic: Establishing the pastoral relation, holding together the family of Christ, what is right and expedient? Pastoral calling, when death comes to your homes, more than the wedding ceremony, preparing children for church membership, the pastor and adolescent boys, the pastor and college students, the conference room, from parish to pulpit, and the Layman's part. In his discussion of certain of these topics, he makes practical use of certain principles of psychoanalysis and psychiatry. A fresh and helpful treatment of the pastoral ministry, which is regaining its important place of service in the church.

Christianity, by Edwyn Bevan, LL.D., Hon. Fellow of New College, Oxford. Holt. 240 pp. \$1.25. This volume is No. 146 of The Home University Library of Modern Knowledge, each volume of which is written by an authority. This

particular volume gives an outline of the history of Christianity, both in its life and in its thought. It is exceedingly well done. The average reader will find here, very likely, all he wishes to know about the development of Christianity. The chapter headings are: Origins, the Church among the Gentiles, the Pagan world and the Church, Internal consolidation during the first three centuries, Controversies and Councils, the Christian Empire, the Middle Ages, the Reformation, From the Reformation to the French Revolution, and the situation today.

The Rebel Prophet, Studies in the Personality of Jeremiah, by T. Crouther Gordon, D.F.C., M.A. Harpers. 260 pp. \$2.00. The substance of this book was given first as a course of lectures at Trinity College, Glasgow. It is a fresh and fascinating portrayal of Jeremiah. He is pictured as a statesman, a religious rebel, an optimist, a poet, and a mystic. In the last chapter, entitled Jeremiah and Jesus. Dr. Gordon points out many resemblances, in spirit at least, between this great O.T. prophet and the prophet of Nazareth. "The same broad stream of moral monotheism," Dr. Gordon affirms, "flows through both lives; the same stern and uncompromising jealousy for high and sacred things animates and inflames each heart." Readers of this study of Jeremiah will gain new insight into his personality, attainments, achievements, and contribution to Jewish thought and life. Dr. Gordon reveals himself, in this study, as a scholar, and as a man of independent judgment. His book is illumined with literary and historical sidelights. He will communicate to all his readers, we feel sure, his own high estimate and glowing admiration for Jeremiah, as one of the greatest of the O.T. prophets.

Humanism as a Way of Life, by Joseph Walker. Macmillan. 83 pp. \$1.25. The author is a prominent Boston lawyer. He wrote this book primarily for his family, that they might know and understand his religious views. If you wish to learn what Humanism is, stripped of all faith in the supernatural and the superhuman, this is the book to read. It is able, and written in a fine humanistic spirit. The author denies that man is, or has, a soul; denies immortality; holds that the Christian God has no objective existence — he is purely an ideal, the Ideal Man. The author holds that "a sound philosophy of life should recognize altruism and idealism as two fundamental characteristics of man."

Managing One's Self, by James Gordon Gilkey, M.A., D.D. Macmillan. 238 pp. \$1.75. The author is minister of South Congregational Church, Springfield, Mass. He has built up a great congregation, a large proportion of which consists of young people, and to whom he is a counsellor.

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guide, and friend. In a sense, this book is a sequel to his "Solving Life's Everyday Problems," published two years ago. Like the former, this book is full of sound counsel and inspiration. It shows how one may build up for himself a finer and more effective personality. Dr. Gilkey quotes the late Dwight L. Moody as saying "I have had more trouble with myself than with any other person I know." This confession, Dr. Gilkey says, applies to each one of us, and he is right! The ten problems he discusses here are: Locating one's spiritual burden, mastering an inferiority complex, limiting the load on one's mind, controlling one's moods, learning to work under pressure, managing personal relationships, keeping enthusiastic about one's job, watching the other person win, maintaining one's composure, and making a new start in middle life. He treats these problems from the Christian viewpoint. He holds that they need for their solution applied Christianity as well as applied psychology. This is a book of sound teaching and counsel, and is full of inspiration, as well.

1933 Tarbell's Teachers' Guide to the International S.S. Lessons, Improved Uniform Course, by Martha Tarbell, Ph.D. Twenty-Eighth Volume. Revell. 432 pp. \$2.00, postpaid. The many thousands of users of this outstanding "guide," from year to year, will find the 1933 volume fully up to the very high standard of previous years. As a matter of fact, the present reviewer thinks it is better than ever. It contains everything Sunday school teachers need, in exposition, illustration, and application of the lessons; and also suggestions from the Great Teacher on clarity of speech, parables and illustrations, and truth mediated through personality. It explains the text clearly; portrays the historical and geographical backgrounds; and gives light from Oriental life; furnishes maps, pictures, incidents, and anecdotes, which will help to make the teaching definite and effective. The lesson material is pupil-centered as well as Bible-centered. Such a wealth of material in the hands of any person should make him an inspiring Bible teacher, and a moulder of religious personalities. Many other S.S. lesson "helps" are fine and genuinely helpful, but Tarbell's Guide is second to none.

The Lesson Round Table, for guidance in the study of the Improved International 1933 Uniform S.S. lessons. Edited by Richard D. Dodge. Cokesbury. 381 pp. \$1.25. The unique feature, and it is a valuable one, of The Lesson Round Table is that each lesson is interpreted by a different teacher, especially chosen for his ability to expound and apply the lesson assigned him. The list of teachers is impressive. It includes such well-known persons as Wilfred T. Grenfell, W. Russell Bowie, Lucius H. Bugbee, Worth M. Tippy, Halford E. Luccock, Walter E. Bundy, Robert Freeman, Hugh T. Kerr, Bishop W. G. Clippinger, Alva W. Taylor, Clarence E. Macartney, Edgar DeWitt Jones, and Charles Darsie. To each lesson is appended a list of thought-stimulating and conscience-arousing questions as to the application of its teachings to personal and

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The Voice Within Us, Story Talks to Children, by Stuart Nye Hutchison, D.D., Pastor East Liberty Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa. Revell. 182 pp. \$1.50. Dr. Hutchison is a masterpreacher to children. The fifty-two sermons in this book were preached to the children of his own church. One group of the talks deals with writers of the N.T.; another with the great Christian festivals; and the third, with the Boy Scouts' Key Words. The book is a treasure house of character-building story-sermons to children.

The Minister—Forerunner

(Continued from page 149)

one under-paid preacher. His trumpet gives a more uncertain sound, the vision splendid grows dim, and instead of a brave, clear "voice" crying repentance to king and soldier, he becomes more of an echo, a timid time-server for the "powers that be." Protestantism has lost too many of its finest spirits from the pulpit because the laity has forgotten this economic side of the existence of its ministry. Even the most Christ-captivated of the preachers admitted once, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." Because of the strain on this "earthen vessel" countless high-minded ministers, surveying the material needs of their loved ones, have felt their early glow and joy in the ministry slipping

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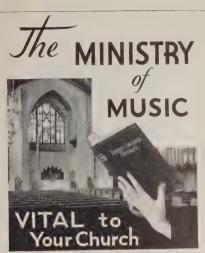
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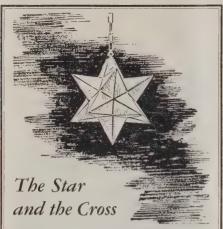
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from them, and have reluctantly turned to other fields of activity with greater material compensation.

The latest book of Gerald Stanley Lee, "Heathen Rage," has a section "On Parsons" in the midst of which he has this pessimistic sentence, "The average parson not only feels lonesome; he feels helpless . . . a bystander in human life watching other people living real lives while he, in his shut-away state keeps on year after year making believe at living his." Nothing could be much farther from truth, as it is experienced by numberless ministers of this day. As they have regarded themselves as the fore-runners to "straighten the way" for many a twisted life to arrive at the glorious goal of the living Lord. and as they have had the thrill of leading inquiring youth into the presence of the perennial Youth and wearied adults into the inspiring presence of the Christ Himself, they have been convinced that theirs was the real life, and that the joy of exploration into the unseen and leading others there personally, was the highest reward and the most abiding joy after all.

The Ivory Plaque

(Continued from page 146)

eternities, Almighty God found Himself confronted by the same embarrassment.

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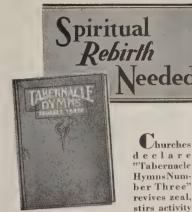
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I have recently enjoyed experiences that strikingly illustrate my theme. Lying beside me on my desk is an album containing a large number of finely-wrought reproductions of the paintings of Turner. I have often turned the pages of this album admiring these exquisite studies in color, just as, on visiting the London galleries, I have admired the priceless originals. But, during the past few weeks, I have read the biography of Turner. And, through these revealing pages, I seem to have met the man. And what a meeting, to be sure! I see him now; short and shockingly plain; walking with a slouch and a shuffle! Poorly educated and possessing no gift of speech, he can never utter half a dozen words distinctly or agreeably. He is uncouth; he is untidy; and, not to put too fine a point upon it, he is dirty. Moreover, his mental make-up is no more pleasing than his physical. He is selfish and

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sordid and spiteful; he is jealous and grasping and mean; he seems in a hurry to pick a quarrel with anybody who crosses his path; he loses no opportunity of venting his spleen on those who have the misfortune to incur his displeasure. A gnarled, twisted, repelling personality, the personality of Turner seems to be. And yet who, treated as cruelly as he was treated, would not be a trifle sour? And besides, if his behavior is sometimes contemptible, it is at other times sublime. He will stick at nothing to humilate a rival; yet, when he finds one of his own pictures hanging in an exhibition beside the work of a young struggler, he is capable of visiting the gallery privately in order to tone down the glories of his own work lest it should throw its more modest neighbor into the shade! He is a very Shylock in wringing from those with whom he has monetary transactions the last penny to which he thinks himself entitled; yet he occasionally makes most princely gifts, and, in his will, devises benefactions so splendid that the nation in general, and his own profession in particular, must always be his grateful debtors. He loves to creep away to a waterside hovel, unknown even to his housekeeper, and, under an assumed name, to live in rags and poverty; yet he bequeathes to the world a record of achievement that, both for quantity and quality, gains in lustre and surprise as the generations come and go. He is a bundle of contradictions, but he is worth knowing. And now that I know him — or fancy that I know him — I return to this album of mine; and I find to my delight that it is simply the biography of Turner over again. I see him everywhere! He is peeping out from every separate part of every separate painting; and I am amazed at my own blindness in not having seen him there before!

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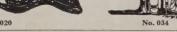
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